



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab States Coordination Meeting Held in Damascus

Buwayz, 'Abd-al-Shafi, Qaddumi Arrive

JN2803081793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and the accompanying delegation arrived in Damascus last night to attend meetings of the foreign ministers of the Arab sides concerned with the peace process due to begin in Damascus today.

In a statement to a Syrian Arab News Agency correspondent, Buwayz said: This meeting is being held under exceptional circumstances that are different from those under which similar previous meetings were held, given the developments that have occurred in this region, not to mention international developments, particularly the change in the U.S. Administration, and the emergence of the deportee issue. Hence, conducting an evaluation of the current phase and the prospects for the next round of negotiations in terms of positive or negative results, is an extremely delicate task that requires further consultations and careful examination.

Concluding, Buwayz affirmed that this meeting is exceptional in every sense of the word. He added: After a careful, realistic, and objective assessment of the current phase, we hopefully will be able to adopt a stand that harmonizes with our pan-Arab convictions.

Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, and Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, also arrived in Damascus yesterday to attend these meetings.

Qaddumi Makes Statement

JN2703220593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Mr. Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, arrived in Damascus this evening, leading a delegation for tomorrow's talks with other Arab parties engaged in the peace process. On hand to greet him at Damascus International Airport were Mr. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, along with top Foreign Ministry officials and the PLO's representative in Damascus.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Qaddumi told SANA that tomorrow's talks are part of periodic sessions held to coordinate plans for actions. This latest meeting, however, is especially important as it comes when the peace process is stalled and is encountering quite a few obstacles. We have to take stock of the recent past as we look to the future, Qaddumi added.

On how the deportee problem may affect the bilateral talks, Qaddumi said the issue will be discussed. What we would like to see happen, however, is for Israel to refrain from deportations.

Asked about the U.S. stance in light of Mr. Faysal al-Husayni's Washington visit, Qaddumi said that, as a matter of fact, the U.S. position remains either vague or short on convincing specifics. The message we are trying to send to the United States is that it needs to be an unbiased sponsor of the peace conference, since taking sides will hardly further the cause of peace.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Arrives

JN2803104993 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0950 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Damascus, 28 Mar (SANA)—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa arrived in Damascus at 1130 today to participate in the coordination meeting of the Arab parties concerned with the peace process.

He was received on arrival at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, ranking Foreign Ministry officials, the Egyptian ambassador in Damascus, and the Embassy staff.

In a statement to reporters on arrival, the minister said: The main subject to be discussed by the Damascus meeting is the resumption of the peace process. We expect positive results and a solution to the deportee issue before the resumption of the peace process.

On the impact of the Syrian-Egyptian summit, he said it will reflect positively on the Arab situation.

Jordan's Foreign Minister Arrives

JN2803105193 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0955 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Damascus, 28 Mar (SANA)—Jordanian Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir arrived in Damascus this morning to participate in the coordination meeting of the Arab parties concerned with the peace process.

He was received on arrival by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Jordanian ambassador in Damascus.

Coordination Meeting Begins

JN2803133993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The coordination meeting of the Arab parties directly concerned with the peace process began in Damascus at 1300 today. Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' led the Syrian delegation; Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa led the Egyptian delegation; Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz led the Lebanese delegation; Jordanian Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir led the Jordanian delegation; and Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, led the PLO delegation.

At noon today, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' conferred with the foreign ministers of Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan and with the head of the PLO Political Department. During the meeting, they held consultations and exchanged views on the agenda topics of the coordination meeting of the Arab parties directly concerned with the peace process.

Syrian, Lebanese Ministers Review Meeting

JN2803181093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The coordination meeting of Arab parties directly concerned with the peace process began in Damascus at 1300 today. [passage omitted]

Various aspects of the peace process were discussed during this meeting. The meeting will resume this evening.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' made a statement to reporters following the coordination meeting's first session. He said that various aspects of the peace process were discussed during this session, and that the meeting was positive. [passage omitted]

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz asserted that the Damascus meeting of Arab foreign ministers concerned with the peace process is of particular importance and nature. In an exclusive statement to Damascus radio, Buwayz said: This meeting convenes after the transfer of power in the United States and after the peace talks went through a lukewarm phase. This meeting also convenes at a time when there are many great challenges, particularly the Palestinian deportee issue and Israel's intransigent rejection of UN Security Council Resolution 799. Buwayz added: The atmosphere of Resolution 799 prevails in this meeting; hence the crucial character of both the decisions and discussions taking place here.

Buwayz expressed his belief that the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Damascus need to exchange views, information, and facts as well as realistic and objective analyses so they can reach a unified Arab stance. He said: The unity of the stand is more important than its content, and the ministers can adopt positive or negative stands. However, he added, the fragmentation of the Arab ranks will make such stands lose their weight and effectiveness.

Buwayz added: We will emerge from our meeting with a united stand toward the issue of participating or not participating in the next round of peace talks, regardless of the facts. The Lebanese foreign minister said: We need to listen to the Palestinian brothers, particularly those who have made contacts with the United States and those involved in the so-called U.S. intervention or initiative on implementing, or improving, the terms for implementing Resolution 799.

In response to a question regarding Lebanon's stand toward Resolution 425, Buwayz said: A comprehensive solution is an indivisible part of the bases established for

the peace conference. Such a solution will ensure the success of peace. Peace can be either comprehensive or nonexistent, he noted.

'Urayqat, Musa Comment on Talks

NC2803190093 Paris AFP in English 1810 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Report by Elie Fayad]

[Excerpt] Damascus, March 28 (AFP)—Arab officials met in the Syrian capital Sunday [28 March] to debate whether to boycott the next round of peace talks with Israel.

Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan have declined to commit themselves to attending the ninth round of talks in Washington without the Palestinians, who are waiting for an Israeli promise to renounce deportations.

"Either all Arab parties will attend the talks or none will," according to Sa'ib 'Urayqat, a member of the Palestinian peace negotiating team who was attending the two-day Damascus meeting.

Palestine Liberation Organization officials here said the Arabs will not make a final decision on the fate of the next round until Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak returns from Washington on April 6.

The Arabs see the United States, the architect of the peace talks launched in Madrid in October 1991, as capable of pressuring Israel into making concessions.

'Urayqat said the Palestinians have "still received no assurances" from Washington that would allow for the talks to resume.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, whose country plays a mediating role because it has a peace treaty with Israel, said here that all the Arabs agreed the Palestinians should return from exile in Lebanon.

But he did not say whether this was a condition for resuming peace talks.

"We all demand the return of the Palestinians, and efforts in this direction are continuing," Musa said. "This question constitutes an obstacle and upsets the atmosphere of the peace process."

Current efforts are aimed at "overcoming this obstacle in a period allowing for the resumption of the peace process in better conditions," he said, before leaving the meeting early to return to Cairo.

Egyptian presidential advisor Usamah al-Baz meanwhile told the Lebanese newspaper, AL-DIYAR, that the collapse of the peace talks could lead to a new regional war.

'Urayqat said the Arabs were eager to overcome obstacles blocking a resumption of the peace talks scheduled

for April 20 in Washington. "The Arab position in principle is to persevere in the peace process." [passage omitted]

Musa, Qaddumi Assess First Round

JN2803201193 Damascus Syrian Arab Television
Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] [Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' made a statement to reporters following the first session of the Damascus coordination meeting of Arab parties directly concerned with the peace process. He said that various aspects of the peace process were discussed during this session, and that the meeting was positive.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa made a statement to reporters following this session. He said that the initial analyses on the coordination meeting do not need such an uproar. The U.S. side is aware that we are not in a position to take it or leave it. We are participating in the peace process out of our commitment to peace and with a free will. If the matter is one of taking it or leaving it, then this is not a peace process; it is a process of dictating instead of negotiating.

Regarding the atmosphere in the coordination meeting, Musa said: The ideas were close and the analyses were profound and comprehensive. I believe that there were no points of contention at all. The basic Arab stand reflects our commitment to the peace process and, at the same time, our refusal to deal with Israel in a way contrary to the law. It also rejects the serious precedence of bargaining on Security Council resolutions, and includes a call on Israel to honor the legitimacy that constitutes the tool of the peace process.

Musa said: The Arabs engaged in the peace process to achieve a just and comprehensive peace, and not for the sake of separate bilateral agreements. Therefore, I do not think that there will be participation by a certain Arab group without the other parties; Arab participation will either be comprehensive or not at all. Replying to a question on whether a final decision has been made during the meeting, Musa said: There will be another meeting this afternoon. Asked about Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's European tour and whether he will be bringing with him certain ideas, Musa said: President Mubarak will carry the Arab stand and convey it to both the European parties and the United States as agreed upon after discussions held yesterday between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak, and also after the Arab stance achieved today during the five-man meeting. There are Arab contacts in this regard, he added.

Asked whether a decision has been made on the deportee issue, Musa said: Naturally, the deportee issue is a problem and constitutes an obstacle that disturbs the atmosphere of peace. We are exerting continued efforts to overcome this obstacle so the peace process can resume in a better and more appropriate atmosphere.

Regarding the Arab stand, Musa said: The Syrian, Egyptian, and Palestinian stands are one stand; we all demand that the deportees return home. Endeavors are continuing within this framework. Regarding the continuation of peace talks, Musa said: There are invitations to the Arab parties to hold a ninth round of talks on 20 April, and we are still discussing this issue. Asked about President Husni Mubarak's upcoming visit to Washington, Musa said: After yesterday's meetings between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak and after the five-man meeting here in Damascus, President Mubarak will have a complete file on the Arab stance toward the peace process and on the Arab desire to render this process a success and remove the obstacles impeding it, as well as on the Arab concern for the seriousness of the peace process and that negotiations not be held for the sake of negotiations but for the sake of reaching a just, peaceful settlement based on exchanging land for peace.

Asked whether he will carry to Cairo and then to Washington the stance adopted at the Damascus meeting, Musa said: Yes, I will carry this stand.

Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, also made a statement stressing adherence to an immediate repatriation of the deportees. He said: The Palestinians will continue to suspend the talks until the obstacles placed by Israel are removed. These obstacles include the failure to return the deportees. Qaddumi pointed out that the Arabs support the Palestinian stand. He asserted that there was almost complete understanding during the meeting.

Egypt's Musa Comments, Departs

NC2803161193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1521 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Amman [as received] 28 Mar (MENA)—Following the end of the first session of the Jordanian foreign ministers meeting, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Damascus for Cairo this evening to meet with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat.

In a predeparture statement, Musa said the meeting dealt with ways to push the peace process forward and eliminate the obstacles facing it. These are the same topics that Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad discussed yesterday and President Mubarak will discuss with president 'Arafat today.

Musa said President Mubarak will thus have a complete file on the peace process before he leaves for Europe and the United States. This file stresses the Arab desire to promote the peace process and achieve full peace on the basis of land for peace.

Al-Shar' Reviews Evening Session

JN2903202293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign ministers of the Arab states directly concerned with the peace process resumed their meetings in Damascus at 1815 today. The officials continued consultations and coordination on adopting a unified Arab stance toward the peace process. In this session, it was decided to set up a committee to draft a joint statement which will be discussed during tomorrow morning's session.

Following tonight's meeting, [Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' made a statement to reporters. He said: Profound discussions were held during this session. It was agreed to establish a committee to formulate and prepare the draft of a joint statement that will be issued tomorrow. The joint statement will include the major points agreed upon among the delegations taking part in this meeting. Asked about participation in the Washington peace talks, he said: Tomorrow's statement will clarify our final stand. Replying to another question regarding the presence of understanding among the parties participating in the meeting, al-Shar' said: There was full understanding among all the Arab parties.

Jordan's Abu-Jabir Reviews Meeting

JN2903211493 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Report by Salim 'Ali Dhiyah from Damascus]

[Excerpts] The coordination meeting of foreign ministers from Arab countries concerned with the peace process with Israel, including Egypt, began here in Damascus today amid difficult circumstances and several obstacles facing the peace process and threatening its future.

A source close to the Jordanian delegation to the meetings said that all the participating delegations were concerned with the deportee issue. Jordan's foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, had this to say about today's meetings.

[Begin Abu-Jabir recording] At the head of the issues we discussed was, of course, the issue of deportees, which still represents an obstacle to continuing the peace process. We discussed U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's visit to the region and the outcome of Rabin's visit to Washington. Moreover, we fully and comprehensively reviewed overall issues related to the peace process at this time. [passage omitted]

There is no doubt that we are currently at a decisive point in the history of the entire peace process, especially if we look at the deportee issue and the obstacle it is creating. Issues are still outstanding and the picture is still incomplete. Since a Palestinian delegation held meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Christopher and since Arab parties will hold such meetings in Washington, we kept the Damascus meeting open in which no

decision may be made at this point, and we will wait until the picture is complete before making any decisions. [end recording] [passage omitted]

No Final Decision on Talks Expected

JN2903063393 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] The foreign ministers of the cordon states [duwal al-tawq] have concluded the second round of their talks in Damascus without any announcement on the outcome of their talks. The participating delegates merely said that the points of agreement will be included in an official statement following a third and final round of talks at 1000 today.

Sa'ib 'Urayqat, member of the Palestinian negotiating team, was somewhat pessimistic regarding the presence of some problems. He said the Palestinian delegation has doubts about the possible resumption of negotiations.

Radio Monte Carlo has learned from informed sources that the Damascus meeting will not lead to a final decision on whether the Arab delegations will participate in the next round of talks. Accordingly, the Damascus meeting will be considered open so that another meeting can be held in Damascus on 13 or 14 April. In the meantime, the door will remain open for the completion of moves aimed at pressuring Israel. The Palestinian leadership will by then have assessed the results of its delegation's recent talks with U.S. officials in Washington during its Tunis meeting on 31 March. President Mubarak will also have concluded his talks with President Clinton, slated for next week.

Meetings Conclude; Statement Issued

JN2903114493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] The foreign ministers of the Arab countries concerned with the peace process have concluded their meetings in Damascus at noon today and issued a statement in which they decided to keep their coordinative meeting open pending the outcome of the consultations and contacts currently taking place among the concerned Arab parties and the cosponsors of the conference with the aim of removing the obstacles Israel is placing along the path of peace. They decided to resume this coordinative meeting in Damascus at a later time in order to take the appropriate steps.

The Arab parties participating in the peace process emphasized their commitment to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the full implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for Israel's withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, and Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from Lebanese territories.

The participating Arab parties stressed their adherence to the principle of the comprehensiveness of the solution and the implementation of the bases, principles, and resolutions on which the peace process was based on all fronts and for all parties. They also stressed that the role of full partner as expressed by the American sponsor of the conference should be devoted to upholding international legitimacy and honestly implementing in letter and spirit the bases, principles, and resolutions on which the peace process is based.

The participating delegations condemned the repeated Israeli attacks on Lebanese territories. They also condemned the continuing Israeli policy of settlement, repression, and inhuman practices in the occupied Palestinian territories. The foreign ministers called on the Security Council, the cosponsors of the conference, and the international community to adopt measures to protect the Palestinian people under occupation.

The participating delegations reiterated their strong condemnation of Israel's refusal to implement Security Council Resolution 799 and called on the Security Council to force Israel to implement this resolution by immediately returning all deportees and by pledging not to resort to the policy of deportation in the future.

Al-Shar' Statement on Meetings

NC2903122993 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1045 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Statement by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' at a news conference at the conclusion of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the Arab states concerned with the peace process, in Damascus on 29 March—recorded]

[Text] At the invitation of the foreign minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, the foreign ministers of the Arab states taking part in the bilateral peace talks—the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, Palestine, and the Syrian Arab Republic, and the participation of the foreign minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt—met in Damascus on 28-29 March 1993 as part of the coordination meetings the Arab parties have been holding since the start of the peace process. The heads of the Arab delegations to the bilateral peace talks and a number of the delegation members also took part in the meetings.

The ministers reviewed the developments in the peace process and the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent visit to the area. They also discussed the serious and increasingly deteriorating situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the escalation of the Israeli policy of repression and persecution, Israel's violation of the fourth Geneva agreement of 1949, and its failure to abide by UN Security Council Resolution 799, which calls on it to return all the Palestinian deportees immediately.

The ministers noted with concern that the U.S. role has not led to progress in the peace process or to forcing

Israel to implement UN Security Council Resolution 799. They also denounced attempts to circumvent the resolution. The ministers also said that what was announced during and after the recent Israeli prime minister's visit to Washington has raised doubts and increased the Arabs' concern about the future of the peace process, particularly with regard to the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel, which contradicts the U.S. role as a sponsor and honest broker.

The ministers also discussed the co-sponsors' invitations to the parties involved to resume the bilateral peace talks and participate in the ninth round in Washington from 20 April to 6 May 1993. Following extensive deliberations, the ministers agreed on the following:

1. The Arab parties involved in the peace process confirm their commitment to the objective of establishing a comprehensive and just peace in the area on the basis of the complete implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, and UN Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

2. The participating Arab parties confirm their adherence to the principle of a comprehensive solution and the implementation of the basis, principles, and resolutions on which the peace process was established on all the fronts and for all parties.

3. The participating parties welcome the statement by the U.S. conference sponsor about its readiness to play the role of full partner in the bilateral talks, to push them forward and vitalize them, and to offer ideas and proposals to overcome the obstacles that hinder the success of the talks. However, these parties affirm that the role of full partner must be based on support for international legitimacy and work to faithfully implement, in letter and spirit, the basis, principles, and resolutions on which the process is based.

4. The participating delegations denounce the repeated Israeli attacks against Lebanese territory and the continued policy of colonization, repression, and the inhuman Israeli actions in the occupied Palestinian territories, including blowing up houses with rockets, arming settlers, and disregarding the killing of innocent Palestinian civilians. They affirm that resistance to the Israeli occupation is a legitimate right of self-defense according to the principles of the UN Charter and international law. The foreign ministers call on the UN Security Council, the co-sponsors of the conference, and the international community to adopt the necessary measures to protect the Palestinian people under occupation.

5. The participating delegations reiterate their strong condemnation of Israel's refusal to implement UN Security Council Resolution 799 and draw the attention of the Security Council and the international community to the fact that the deported Palestinians have been enduring the tragedy for more than three months, away

from their homes and families, and under unfair and harsh conditions. They call on the Security Council to force Israel to implement the resolution and return all the deportees immediately and to force it to pledge not to resort to the policy of deportation in the future.

6. In light of the above, the ministers decided to keep their coordination meeting open in anticipation of the results of the consultations and contacts taking place among the Arab parties concerned and the co-sponsors of the conference with a view to removing the obstacles placed by Israel in the way of peace, and to resume this coordination meeting in Damascus later to adopt the appropriate decisions.

Palestinian Affairs

Talks Participation Said To Hinge on U.S. Meeting

TA2603151993 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic
24 Mar 93 pp 1, 19

[Excerpts] Jerusalem—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the chief Palestinian negotiator, has affirmed that the Palestinian delegation's participation in the ninth round of Arab-Israeli talks will be possible if the deportee issue is resolved before the date set for the resumption of negotiations. He emphasized the Palestinian stance, which calls for nonparticipation unless there is an Israeli commitment to the spirit of Security Council Resolution 799.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that Palestinian participation will be possible if Israel undertakes to halt its deportation policy and agrees to repatriate the Palestinian deportees according to a timetable. He added that if this is realized we will take part in the upcoming round but we will raise and underscore the six points, particularly those relating to the terms of reference of the negotiating process, implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and protection of human rights in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi stressed that during the meeting of foreign ministers of the cordoned states, the Palestinians will try to persuade the Arab parties to adopt a stance similar to that of the Palestinians regarding the ninth round of negotiations. He said: This meeting will discuss Palestinian-Arab coordination.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi emphasized the importance of the Palestinian-U.S. meeting expected to be held 26 March and said: This meeting will determine whether we will take part in the ninth round. He added: Even if the deportee issue is resolved, the fact remains that the talks are in an impasse. The meeting with the Americans will dwell on this issue.

In response to recent Israeli measures, the growing number of Palestinian victims, and Yitzhak Rabin's appeal to the Israelis to volunteer for the Civil Guard to confront what he termed terrorism, the chief Palestinian

negotiator called on the international community to provide international protection for the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Palestinian Delegation Visits U.S. for Talks

'Arafat Welcomes Visit

LD2603184193 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1702 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, has stressed that the just solution and just peace is the Palestinian peace, a peace for our children and their children in the land of peace—Palestine.

Today, in a statement to WAFA on the Palestinian delegation's visit to Washington to meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the U.S. Administration, brother Abu-'Ammar said: We in the PLO welcomed the message we received from the U.S. Administration on the holding of this meeting. The meeting will be an important opportunity to explain the Palestinian stand in light of current developments, following Mr. Christopher's recent tour of the region and its results, whether in relation to the negotiations, the deportees, and holy Jerusalem, in relation to the siege imposed on the Palestinian people, or in relation to the organized official terrorism practiced by the Israeli forces of occupation against our people and the rise in the number of victims in the form of martyrs, injured and detained people, most of whom are young people and children. All this is in addition to the continuing violation of Palestinian human rights. Our people have the right to resist this occupation, its brutality and terrorism, and its growing iron fist in our occupied land, which are causing enmity and hatred to increase.

The brother leader stated: It is our right to ask whether international legitimacy has one standard or double standards—one against our people and nation and one for Israel. The brother President Abu-'Ammar added: Despite this we support the peace process and wish that the U.S. Administration and peace lovers in Israel would remove the obstacles being put in the way of this process. He stressed that if someone really wants peace he does not cover the road to it with blood. Brother Abu-'Ammar said: I appeal to the Israeli people to revise their calculations in light of the fast-moving international changes and in light of the Palestinians' firm will to make peace. Brother Abu-'Ammar added: Let everyone know that the just peace and comprehensive peace is the Palestinian peace, peace for our children and their children in the land of peace—Palestine. Brother President Abu-'Ammar declared: I sincerely hope our Palestinian delegation will find answers that will propel the peace process forward.

'Ashrawi: No Talks Without Deportee Return

NC2603200993 Paris AFP in English 1902 GMT
26 Mar 93

[Text] Washington, March 26 (AFP)—A member of the Palestinian delegation to Middle East peace talks said Friday [26 March] it would not participate in a new round of Arab-Israeli negotiations unless a satisfactory agreement is reached on the return of 400 Palestinians deported by Israel.

"Both our public opinion and our leadership have to be satisfied," said Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to earlier peace talks, renewing a call for a new plan on the deportees in the no-man's land in southern Lebanon.

Although an agreement announced by Washington and Israel would allow the expelled Palestinians to return in phases by the end of the year, Palestinian leaders have rejected the plan, saying it fails to conform with a UN Security Council resolution.

"We feel that the agreement that (Washington) reached with the Israelis, we are still convinced, does not address the real issue," 'Ashrawi told AFP. "There are steps which can be taken ... it is time to demonstrate real commitment and real good faith and the ability to take a decision which would help the peace process."

'Ashrawi was in Washington along with the head of the Palestinian delegation's steering committee, Faysal al-Husayni, to meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The United States and Russia have invited Arab and Israeli leaders to a new round of peace discussions starting April 20 in Washington, but the Palestinians have said they would not participate as long as the deportee situation is not resolved.

"Our decision has to do what is political acceptable by the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) and the Palestinians as part of an overall agreement that will enable us to go back to the peace process," she said.

A State Department official said meanwhile that negotiations appeared to be having an effect on Israel.

"We got more concessions from the Israelis on deportation than anyone else in the last 44 years," said an official, who declined to be identified. "So for the Arabs to squeal and whine that the president (Bill Clinton) is ignoring the deportation issue, they are not looking at the whole picture."

'Nothing Changed' in Position

LD2603200893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 2014 GMT
26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Washington, 26 Mar (KUNA)—The Palestinian delegation to the peace talks arrived here at an early time today in an attempt to break the deadlock of the peace talks. [passage omitted]

One of the delegation officials insisted in a discussion with KUNA that the team is not carrying any new ideas, and that the Palestinian position has thus far not undergone any change in connection with the refusal to participate in the forthcoming round until Israel returns all the deportees.

The official who insisted on his name not being mentioned said: "We have to wait and see what the American administration will offer. As for us, nothing has changed in our position." [passage omitted saying U.S. State Department officials informed KUNA earlier this week that they had decided to invite the Palestinians after the other Arab delegations expressed reservations about attending the ninth round in the absence of the Palestinians; Christopher this afternoon met with al-Husayni, and a longer session is planned after that with Christopher's high-ranking officials; another session between the two sides is scheduled for 27 March]

'Ashrawi on Washington Talks

JN2803173493 Jerusalem Qol Yisrael in Arabic 1555
GMT 28 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman for the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, in Washington by Sa'id Mu'addi in Jerusalem, carried within the "With the Events" program, date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, good evening.

['Ashrawi] Good evening.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, following its talks with U.S. State Department officials, will the Palestinian side take part in the next round of negotiations?

['Ashrawi] We are still working on issues in a comprehensive, substantial, and serious manner. However, as you know, a decision to this effect will be made at the end of this month after the Palestinian leadership meets in Tunis. We have informed them of what has happened and the way matters and issues are being handled. We also still need to see that practical, tangible, and executive steps are taken before an appropriate decision is made.

[Mu'addi] What kind of guarantees has the Palestinian side received from the U.S. Administration with regard to the deportee issue?

['Ashrawi] We have discussed various issues—the deportees, deportations in general, political issues, and issues related to the term of reference for the negotiating process, the U.S. role, and Israeli proposals. All such matters have been discussed in a comprehensive manner, taking into consideration Palestinian rights and demands. We do not differentiate between issues, neither do we view a single issue without viewing the overall demands and obstacles that must be removed.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, it was declared today that the U.S. Administration has invited all participating Arab parties

to Washington for consultations before convening the next round of talks in an effort to guarantee the resumption of bilateral negotiations on 20 April. Has the Palestinian side received such an invitation? When will this meeting be held?

[Ashrawi] Yes, we have received an invitation. I believe such meetings are held routinely before each round of talks for purposes of coordination and to keep the U.S. side informed of positions and developments in the negotiating process. However, we have not given an answer. This is because we are still working on the first steps—the issue of removing obstacles and receiving a practical and tangible response to the Palestinian demands so that an appropriate decision can be made. Then, we will study whether to return to the meetings or send a delegation to follow up on purely negotiatory issues.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, one final question. After the Palestinian delegation's negotiations in Washington, are you now more optimistic than before?

[Ashrawi] We are still working. We do not use descriptive and emotive words to assess the current phase. There are still serious issues under discussion and we are still working on them. If we manage to remove all obstacles in a satisfactory manner for the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian people—in a manner compatible with Palestinian rights and demands—then, of course, there will be positive results. But if matters remain within the verbal domain, this does not guarantee that there will be any changes on the ground.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman for the Palestinian delegation, thank you very much.

[Ashrawi] You are welcome.

More 'Ashrawi Comments

NC2803195693 Paris AFP in English 1940 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Washington, March 28 (AFP)—Palestinian negotiators left Washington Sunday [28 March] signaling that two days of talks with U.S. officials had not convinced them to participate in next month's round of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

"We have to work further," Hanan 'Ashrawi, the spokeswoman of the Palestinian delegation at the Mideast peace talks, told AFP.

The six-member delegation, headed by Faysal al-Husayni, met with Secretary of State Warren Christopher Friday and continued talks on Saturday at the State Department with Edward Djerejian, assistant secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs.

The delegation was in Washington to discuss its refusal to attend the ninth round of bilateral peace talks with Israel, slated for April 20 in Washington, unless the

problem of some 400 Palestinians expelled from Israel to southern Lebanon was resolved.

On Friday, al-Husayni had emphasized the obstacles to resuming the talks, suspended since mid-December. In contrast, the U.S. government said it had found a compromise in negotiating with Israel the incremental return of the expelled Palestinians.

'Ashrawi said before leaving the United States that it was "too early to make a value judgment on whether we are closer or not to an acceptable settlement" of whether to attend the Mideast talks, but emphasized that the discussions had been "very comprehensive."

She said topics included human rights issues in the occupied territories, the role of the United States in the Mideast peace process and the U.S.-Russia letter of invitation to the talks that has served since October 1991 as a framework for the negotiations.

She also indicated that a solution to the Palestinian deportees would need to be politically accepted by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Palestinian public opinion even if it does not bring an immediate return of the deportees.

For the first time, Russian diplomats attended the meetings Friday and Saturday, a State Department official said.

Viktor Gogitidze, head of Mideast affairs in the Russian foreign ministry, and a Russian diplomat posted in Washington attended the meeting, the official said, speaking privately.

'Ashrawi: No Decision Yet

TA2803070293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500
GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] In Washington, the attempts to persuade the Palestinians to go back to the negotiating table have produced no visible results. Reporter Connie Lonn asked Palestinian spokesperson Hanan 'Ashrawi what issues were holding back Palestinian agreement to attend.

[Begin recording] [Ashrawi] Well, of course they have to do with deportations, with human rights, and at the same time in working out mechanisms and complete implementations of ideas. Let's put it that way: Dealing with the peace process, as well as with the American role itself, and with ongoing negotiations. Let us say that the decision will be taken after the meeting of the leadership in Tunis at the end of the month. We still consider the discussions ongoing, and there are several areas that we have to explore more concretely and we have to pursue more concretely. So, there would be a follow-up with the Americans and probably with the Israelis on issues like that.

[Lonn] Can you come back to the table while the deportees are still in Lebanon?

[Ashrawi] I don't think it pays to oversimplify issues like that. There is a whole comprehensive perspective on

issues. We are not saying either/or and we are not saying everything is conditional upon one thing. We are saying the deportees are essential, but at the same time, they are within the context of deportations as a whole, and the human rights situation as a whole. All these have to be dealt with also politically within the peace process and within the proposals and positions, and respect for terms of reference that have to be addressed as a package deal. Therefore, to just isolate one or other factor might not be very productive, but to look at the whole thing comprehensively and to address the factual issues in practical ways that would signal a qualitative change in future behavior and future relations in the region, that would be much more productive and essential and fruitful to our talks. [end recording]

'Arafat on Peace Process

NC2803115793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Tunis, 28 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has reiterated that President Husni Mubarak is making significant and fundamental efforts at various levels and directions to boost the peace process and promote the Palestinian issue.

In an exclusive and comprehensive interview with Muhammad Sayf, MENA correspondent in Tunis, 'Arafat said that Egypt is not an observer or a mediator in the peace process, but a partner in the entire process.

'Arafat said that the Palestinian side considers President Mubarak and Egypt as full partners in the peace process and the Palestinian issue. 'Arafat pointed out that Mubarak has made several Arab and international contacts to advance the peace process. The last of these contacts was the meeting between Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Israeli counterpart Shim'on Peres in Europe and the visit to Israel by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

'Arafat maintained that all these contacts are aimed at halting Israel's attempts to obstruct the peace process, the resolution of the deportees issue, and the implementation of Resolution 799. He said that the issue of Jerusalem is not only a Palestinian issue, but one that concerns the Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians. 'Arafat said that Israel continues to violate human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention through its practices inside the occupied Palestinian territories. He said that Israel is erecting all these obstacles to prevent the peace process from moving forward, as we all wish.

The Palestinian president said he will ask Mubarak during their meeting, to be held in the next few hours, to convey the Palestinian point of view to the U.S. Administration during his visit to Washington on 6 April. The Palestinian views revolve around a group of basic issues dealing with the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian stand on the peace

negotiations and current developments, including the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the Middle East in February.

In his statement to MENA, 'Arafat said he will discuss with Mubarak topics dealing with the unity of the Arab stand, the projected issues, and the various challenges facing the Arab nation.

The Palestinian president said that the Palestinian leadership will meet in Tunis 1-8 April. He said that in light of these meetings, the outcome of the cordon states foreign ministers' meeting in Damascus, and Mubarak's visit to the United States, the Palestinian stand will be defined as to whether to participate in the ninth round of peace negotiations.

The Palestinian president rejected the U.S.-Russian invitation to participate in the ninth round of the peace talks set to be held on 20 April. He said that only the Palestinian leadership, which rejected the invitation, can change its position at its next meeting and return to the peace negotiations, and that he cannot take such a decision alone because there is Palestinian democracy which, though a tiresome democracy, is at the same time something of which we are proud.

Regarding the repercussions of the Palestinians' absence from the next round of peace negotiations and the possibility that they themselves might be outside the political game, 'Arafat asked: Can there be peace without the Palestinian people or without a solution to the Palestinian problem? He added that all the other issues have stemmed from the Palestinian issue, which is the crux of the conflict.

'Arafat reported that there are constant contacts with the United States at various levels, in several directions, and through several channels, including the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the Palestinian delegation led by Faysal al-Husayni, which is in Washington right now.

The Palestinian president said that consultations are held constantly between the Palestinian leadership and the brothers in Egypt at several levels. He added that his visit to Egypt within the next few hours to meet with President Husni Mubarak falls within the framework of these consultations. He stressed that the relationship with Egypt is that of a full partner.

In his interview with MENA, 'Arafat said the Palestinians have shown as much flexibility as possible during the peace process. He added: Our continued participation in the negotiations so far despite the difficult and unjust conditions is the greatest flexibility we have shown and allowed for the sake of peace. He went on to say: We are continuing with the peace process 17 months after the start of the peace conference and despite the fact that no progress has been made on the Palestinian front. The outcome of this course so far is nil as a result

of the Israeli intransigence and the insistence on continuing to escalate the iron fist policy against the Palestinian people and the Islamic and Christian holy places.

'Arafat ruled out Syria concluding a unilateral peace agreement with Israel and referred to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's statement that "we will not go to peace except united."

'Arafat said that Rabin's objective is to normalize Arab-Israeli relations and bypass the Palestinian issue and rights, but this will not be achieved. He noted that there is an agreement between the cordon states on the "totality of the Arab solution" and that this has been emphasized at all the meetings held by the cordon states foreign ministers from the start of the peace process to this day.

'Arafat said that the United States is now the only superpower, but there are other major powers including Russia, which has an influential role in the Middle East peace process, remains a cosponsor of the peace conference, and is playing its role despite its domestic problems. He added that the PLO is determined to back and strengthen this Russian role.

'Arafat denounced U.S. attempts to ignore the PLO's role and its refusal to hold dialogue with it. He said that it is like "trying to cover the sun with the palms of your hands."

He stressed that the Palestinian delegation led by Faysal al-Husayni went to Washington to meet Christopher only with the approval of the PLO Executive Committee and that the Palestinian delegation from the territories that met Christopher in Jerusalem was a PLO delegation.

'Arafat revealed that former U.S. Secretary of States James Baker promised the PLO that dialogue would resume after the U.S. presidential elections, but so far this has not happened. He expressed regret that the Clinton administration has not yet rectified this error. He said: Still, it is a new administration and has been in power for only two months. We have to wait and see.

On establishing a confederation between Jordan and Palestine at the end of the autonomy period, 'Arafat said: The Palestine National Council has issued a resolution in each of its successive sessions since 1983 up to now calling for establishing confederal relations [*'ilaqat kunfidaraliyah*] between the states of Jordan and Palestine on the basis of the voluntary and free choice of the Jordanian and Palestinian people. We are committed to this resolution.

Regarding reports about the possible establishment of a Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli confederation, 'Arafat said that statements and proposals about this confederation are "mere air bubbles, no more and no less."

'Arafat called on Israel to establish a united state over all the land of Palestine of dual nationalities [*thuna'iyat al-qawmiyah*] (Palestinians and Jews), similar to the ones in Switzerland and Belgium. He asked: Will Israel accept this proposal, which is a Palestinian plan first

presented in 1969 before the International Parliamentary Union conference in Cairo? He stressed that this plan remains to this day a Palestinian offer to Israel.

'Arafat described the preliminary results of the Palestinian delegation's talks in Washington with Christopher as good. He said: We are waiting for the final report from the delegation when it arrives in Tunis to present it to the Palestinian leadership.

'Arafat refused to answer a question on whether the outcome includes some new developments that encourage the Palestinians to join the ninth round of the negotiations. He said: I cannot answer until I have learned all the details of the negotiations.

'Arafat denied in the interview that his mediation to resolve the dispute between Egypt and Sudan has failed. He said: The joint Egyptian-Sudanese committee met in Sudan recently and it will hold another round in Cairo. It did not expect to solve the differences at the first meeting. He stressed that he will not cease his mediation because he believes that Egyptian-Sudanese relations are fundamental for Arab relations. He added that he is working to improve the Arab climate and that Egyptian-Iraqi relations need activation, not mediation. He said he is only working to clear the Arab atmosphere.

Regarding Palestinian-Gulf relations, he said: We are focusing our efforts on eliminating Arab differences and removing the consequences of the Gulf war. He added: The Arab nation should not live as the prisoner of the Gulf war complex. We are facing a new world order in which we will either exist or not exist. History will not forgive anyone.

The Palestinian president expressed hope that an Arab summit will be held soon, even if only to clear the atmosphere.

He said that the Arab foreign ministers will discuss at their routine meeting on 18 April the peace process developments following the failure to hold an extraordinary session at an urgent Palestinian request.

'Arafat criticized Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] for killing an Israeli soldier before the Palestinians were deported. He said that he rejects this because the tenets of Islam forbid harming a prisoner. He added: Yet, it is Israel's policy that has created the deportees issue, not Hamas.

'Arafat stressed that no power can exclude the PLO from the peace process and find an alternative to it, such as Hamas or some other organizations inside or outside the occupied territories, because the PLO is not an organization but represents the identity of the Palestinian people, while Hamas is merely a trend within the Palestinian revolution.

Peace Team Members Comment

JN2803094093 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28
Mar 93 p 23

[Excerpts] Washington—A Palestinian delegation from the occupied territories, headed by Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Steering Committee of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli negotiations, resumed talks with U.S. officials for the second day at the U.S. State Department yesterday. [passage omitted]

Palestinian delegation member Ghassan al-Khatib told AL-DUSTUR that the intensive talks held with the U.S. side dealt with issues of concern to the Palestinian people, including deportations by the Israeli occupation authorities, the negotiations and their substance, human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel's continuous violation of these rights.

Al-Khatib emphasized that the delegation demanded that Israel publicly pledge not to carry out any deportations of Palestinians in the future, to specify the subjects for negotiation, particularly those concerning the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the geographic area of the transitional self-government, which should include all the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem.

Informed U.S. sources said that [U.S. Secretary of State Warren] Christopher told the delegation that the U.S. Administration had convinced Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to pledge not to carry out any further deportation of Palestinians in the future and that the administration will insist that Israel should take into consideration the principle of land for peace and that East Jerusalem should be discussed within the bilateral Palestinian-Israeli talks.

These sources added that Christopher and [U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Edward] Djerejian told the Palestinian delegation that Washington is ready to bolster its declared position on East Jerusalem by issuing a statement stressing that East Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories and that it is subject to negotiations the same as the rest of the occupied territories.

The U.S. officials emphasized to the Palestinian delegation that the United States will not change its position on staying out of the Arab-Israeli negotiations until it is invited to intervene by both the Arab and the Israeli sides. [passage omitted]

Members of the Palestinian delegation said it will be difficult for Washington to succeed in U.S. efforts to convince the Palestinians to change their position and participate in the next round of negotiations according to the date set by the United States. However, a ranking U.S. official expressed confidence that the Palestinians will participate in the ninth round of negotiations as scheduled in Washington on 20 April.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, this official added that U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian held contacts with Faysal al-Husayni while he was in London earlier this month. Al-Husayni told him that the Palestinian delegation would participate in the ninth round as scheduled. However, the U.S. official said that this was not up to al-Husayni alone, but the rest of the delegation members and whether their approval could be obtained. He said that [Palestinian spokesman] 'Ashrawi, contacted in Jerusalem at the time al-Husayni was contacted, said she would not participate in the talks before the problem of the Palestinian deportees was resolved and before Israel and United States responded positively to the six points conveyed to Christopher during his visit to occupied Palestine last month.

In an effort to pressure the Palestinians, the U.S. officials hinted during their talks with the Palestinian delegation that Syria, which is seeking peace with Israel, will attend the talks on 20 April even without the Palestinians, and that Lebanon will join it, too. However, the Palestinian delegation members, who are hoping that Washington will pressure Israel into making some concessions on the disputed issues, informed the Americans frankly that they are currently in an embarrassing situation.

Agreement To Attend Talks Said Conveyed to U.S.

TA2903132793 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic
29 Mar 93 p 1

[Excerpts] The Palestinian negotiating delegation will participate in the ninth round of negotiations that will be held in Washington. [passage omitted]

AL-MANAR has learned that the United States has agreed on a draft "guarantee" which says: If Israel commits another transgression or carries out new deportation orders, the United States will impose sanctions on it and will stand against it in international forums.

It has also been learned that on Monday [29 March] night [as published] the Palestinian leadership conveyed to the U.S. Administration its agreement to attend the ninth round of negotiations. A Palestinian source says that Washington promised Faysal al-Husayni, through Secretary of State Warren Christopher, that the U.S. Administration will seriously study the possibility of resuming the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue after the ninth round and after the PLO proves its goodwill by allowing the negotiating delegation to attend the upcoming round of negotiations.

The United States also promised the Palestinian leadership and Arab capitals, through the head of the negotiating delegation's steering committee, that it will continue its efforts to repatriate the deportees before the date set for their return. Moreover, the United States promised to have Jerusalem residents participate in the negotiating delegation and to have the issue of Jerusalem discussed in the upcoming rounds of negotiations. It also affirmed that in the coming round, Israel will embark on

discussing substantive issues in order to speed up the achievement of a peace agreement.

'Abd-al-Shafi Comments Before Damascus Meeting

JN2603185493 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpt] A Palestinian delegation which left for Washington yesterday is expected to start talks with the U.S. secretary of state later tonight. The Palestinian delegation will discuss a number of important topics related to the issue of peace in the region, including the terms of reference for the negotiations and the deportees.

Within that same framework, the foreign ministers of the Arab states involved in the peace process and the PLO will hold a coordination meeting in Damascus on Sunday [28 March] and Monday to decide on a position concerning the resumption of the peace talks. An invitation to resume these talks has already been extended.

Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, today arrived in Amman en route for Damascus to attend that meeting. In a statement to our political affairs correspondent, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the Palestinian position will be determined in the light of the talks to be held by the Palestinian delegation in Washington.

Further details on the Palestinian position and Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi's statements in the following report:

[Begin recording] [Jordan Television Political Affairs Correspondent Kassab Samawi] On the eve of his departure to Damascus to attend the coordination meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab parties involved in the peace process, scheduled to be held in the Syrian capital on Sunday and Monday, Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation, believes that this meeting will provide an important opportunity to coordinate and unify the Arab position on participation in the next round of talks, and to review the Arab strategy on the peace process as a whole.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Of course, the issue of unifying stands will be discussed. However, we will discuss this issue in a spirit of objectivity. Our position is that Arab opinions may differ, but our relations should remain cordial and good.

[Samawi] The head of the Palestinian delegation stressed the importance of maintaining a unified Arab stand that adheres to the objective of a just and comprehensive solution on all fronts. 'Abd-al-Shafi also gave the Palestinian reaction to statements by Israeli officials that the next phase of the peace process will concentrate on separate solutions on certain fronts.

['Abd-al-Shafi] I think that progress on any track will mark progress for the Palestinian position. We view this matter in a very objective way. We, at the same time, still believe that a unified Arab position may be the best thing. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Interviewed Before Meeting

JN2803085093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0540 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Interview with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, chief Palestinian delegate to the Arab-Israeli talks, by an unidentified Damascus Radio correspondent in Damascus on 27 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi: You have just arrived from the occupied Arab territories, where Israeli savagery is starkly manifested. Israel is daily increasing its violence and terrorism against our Palestinian Arab people, targeting both young and old. Could you please give us a picture of this situation, which is painful to every Arab, as experienced by you during the past few months?

['Abd-al-Shafi] In fact, the Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories are still suffering a great deal from occupation, particularly since the beginning of the intifadah. Recently, following the deportation of a large number of Palestinians, the citizens tried to express their discontent and anger. The occupation authorities' reply was further violence and repression. The number of fatalities exceeded those registered in any of the previous years of the intifadah. A large number of children were killed and more than 2,000 others, including some 400 children, were wounded. The Israelis resorted to new barbaric methods like hunting down wanted persons and killing many of them in cold blood, vandalizing and shelling houses with rockets. The Israelis always claim they are doing this to counter the Palestinians' attempts to defy occupation and throw stones. Things are crystal clear; the Palestinian people are entitled to defend themselves and reject occupation. Occupation is the reason for the cycle of violence. This cycle cannot end unless Israel respects the UN resolutions and human rights. Otherwise, it will expand. Israel's resort to more violence in the hope of subjugating the Palestinian people has proved futile. We appeal to the world to protect us against this deliberate repression. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Damascus will tomorrow host a meeting for the parties participating in the peace process. This meeting aims to unify the Arab position on the peace talks. President Hafiz al-Asad had earlier stressed that Syria, which often fought alone, cannot take a unilateral action on peace which should be comprehensive. What are your expectations from the meeting?

['Abd-al-Shafi] We hope that the unified Arab position will continue because the cause of peace is inseparable. I am confident that the Arab parties do realize this. President al-Asad's statement came to dispel all doubts that there might not be a unified Arab stand. This statement has actually reassured those who imagined that there could be a unilateral solution. This was essential and came at the right time. This does not mean that I had doubts in this regard, but it confirmed my conviction about Syria's position.

[Correspondent] What are your expectations from tomorrow's meeting?

[Abd-al-Shafi] It will be a frank meeting that will discuss the American invitation to a new round of talks on 20 April. We the Palestinians have a declared stand based on the fact that the negotiations were in a constant impasse up to the end of the eighth round of talks due to Israel's disrespect of the terms of reference—Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. It then surprised us with the expulsion of this number of Palestinians. I saw in this expulsion a continuation of its intransigent and extremist stand at the negotiating table. Our declared position is that we cannot return to the negotiating table as long as Israel refuses to respect the UN resolutions. We said Security Council Resolution 799 on the Palestinian expellees should be implemented. Our position stems from legal considerations connected with the essence of the peace process. Nobody should think we are creating obstacles. This position does not mean we have abandoned the principle of peace. We will be fully prepared to participate in negotiations that have real credibility—negotiations in which Israel abides by the peace terms of reference. This is our position very frankly. We will explain this to our Arab brothers. I am confident we will emerge from the meeting with accord and amity regardless of the decisions made.

[Correspondent] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, Palestinian chief delegate to the peace talks, thank you.

[Abd-al-Shafi] Thank you.

Agreement Said Reached To Return Deportees by Sep
JN2903085593 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0710 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Manama, 29 Mar (WAKH)—High-level Palestinian sources have stated that the talks held by a Palestinian delegation led by Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Steering Committee of the Palestinian delegation to peace talks, with Warren Christopher, U.S. secretary of state, have succeeded in surmounting a number of obstacles preventing Palestinian participation in the next round of bilateral talks in Washington on 20 April.

In a statement to the Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM, published today, the sources said it was agreed to return all deportees before the end of August in groups whose size will be determined by the concerned parties. The sources added that the U.S. officials conveyed to the Palestinian delegation Israel's agreement to return scores of Palestinians deported in past years, provided that their return takes place after the return of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad deportees.

Regarding the legality of deportation, the sources said it was agreed that the United States will, upon the resumption of the ninth round of talks, reaffirm its denunciation of deportation. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will also announce that deportation is not an Israeli

policy, that it has not halted violence, and that there will be no more deportations as long as the negotiations are continuing.

According to the Palestinian sources, the U.S. side will publicly reaffirm that Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories to which Security Council Resolution 242 applies, and that the Americans will this time present specific and explicit proposals to narrow the concerned parties' differences over several issues.

The sources said it is obvious that Hamas will insist on the collective repatriation of deportees. They added that if there is a timetable to repatriate the last batch of deportees by the end of August, then Hamas will postpone the return of all until that date so that they can all return together as pledged earlier in Marj al-Zuhur. Such a return will constitute a large political victory for Hamas and the Islamic current in general.

A senior Hamas official told AL-AYYAM that his movement does not like to rush the return of the deportees as most of them will return to prison. Their stay in Marj al-Zuhur, he added, will continue to highlight the Israeli repression and give them media and political momentum.

European Troika To Meet PLO Political Chief

NC2703070793 Paris AFP in English 2354 GMT
26 Mar 93

[Text] Amman, March 27 (AFP) - The European troika will next week meet here with a senior PLO official in the first such encounter since the start of the Middle East peace process in 1991, chief Palestinian delegate Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi said.

He told AFP that British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen and Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes as well as E.C. Foreign Affairs Commissioner Hans van den Broek would meet with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, on Wednesday [31 March].

'Abd-al-Shafi said the meeting "assumes particular importance, notably in its level of representation on both the European and Palestinian sides."

The European officials are to visit the Middle East from March 30 to April 2 and meet with senior officials in various Arab capitals as well as the Palestinian delegation at the Middle East peace talks.

'Abd-al-Shafi was to travel Friday to Damascus to attend a meeting of Arab foreign ministers which opens Sunday to coordinate action on the peace process and before Egyptian President Husni Mubarak meets U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington on April 6.

The parties involved in talks with Israel which are scheduled to resume in Washington on April 20 are Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians.

The Palestinians have steadfastly refused to return to the negotiating table before the issue of some 400 Palestinians deported by Israel to south Lebanon in December is resolved.

Algeria

Ties With Iran Severed, Ambassador to Sudan Recalled

LD2703193693 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The Higher State Council met at the Presidency of the Republic today under the chairmanship of Ali Kafi. [passage omitted].

Within the framework of the analysis of the world situation, particularly the interference of some states in Algeria's internal affairs, the Higher State Council has decided to break diplomatic relations with Iran and to recall our ambassador from Sudan.

Government Explains Actions

LD2703201393 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] We have just now received the statement of the official spokesman of the Foreign Ministry regarding the severance of diplomatic relations with Iran and recalling Algeria's ambassador from Sudan:

Algeria has decided to sever its diplomatic relations with Iran. This serious decision comes after the numerous actions which show the interference of the Iranian official circles in Algeria's internal affairs. The Higher State Council will, in the framework of continuation of its political program and on the basis of the principles declared in the speech of 4 January, continue talks with the non-political associations, which are considered to be the real shield for the defense of democracy and the nation's values, as well as with parties and personalities which reject terrorism.

The recourse to this decision came after repeated warnings, particularly in January and November, which led to recalling the ambassadors of the two countries and the reduction of the diplomatic representations. Despite these warnings, Iran continued or rather intensified its actions against Algeria. The continuation of such behavior, backed by unacceptable statements by high-ranking officials in the Iranian regime, constitutes blatant violations of the most basic rules of international relations.

All these actions can only lead to the deterioration of relations between Algeria and Iran. Despite this policy, Algeria imposed on itself the principle of respecting non-interference in Iran's internal affairs. It is high time to recall that Algeria has always worked to help this country in the various difficult stages it went through, particularly the decisive participation in solving the border conflict between Iran and Iraq in 1975, the role played by Algeria in solving the American hostages crisis, representing Iranian interests in the United States for more than a decade, as well as the endeavor to put an end to the war with Iraq. Algeria lost its foreign minister and many cadres of the state then.

These actions which symbolized Algeria's solidarity with Iran, which was marginalized by the international community, required that Algeria used considerable means. However, and regrettably, the Iranian policy, took a direction opposite to the trend of solidarity and of safeguarding fraternal relations between the two countries. The Iranian policy was characterized by information campaigns led by high-ranking officials of the Iranian regime and particularly the multifarious support for terrorist actions with the aim of destabilizing Algeria's security.

Such intentions have become clear in broad daylight. The matter no longer concerns destabilizing Algeria—destabilizing Algerian stability—but destabilizing the entire Islamic world and undermining the image of Islam in the world. Under these circumstances, Algeria cannot but place on record in a clear manner its rejection of such actions which contradict the good progress of relations among states.

On the other hand, Algeria has decided to recall its ambassador to Sudan because that country supports terrorist activities. Through these measures, Algeria wants to express its resolve not to permit any interference in its domestic affairs.

Monte Carlo, Iran Report Rumors of Coup d'Etat

Overthrow Said 'Anticipated'

JN2703062893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Qusayy Salih al-Darwish dispatch from Algiers]

[Text] The specter of a coup d'etat is overwhelming the Algerian capital this morning. Rumors to this effect spread widely last night after a tank battalion was sighted around the airport and the port, and after security measures were reinforced around the radio and television building. No military communique has thus far been issued although the military is expected to define its stand on the future of the government today, as we reported yesterday. It seems that matters are proceeding toward the declaration of a state of emergency and the formation of a civil-military or purely military government. This option was strongly presented at a military command meeting a few days ago. However, informed sources have stressed that during that meeting the military was not unanimous in its support for such an option.

A state of emergency would mean suspending the Constitution, freezing partisan and trade-unionist political activity, and imposing direct censorship on the press. The idea of a state of emergency was proposed immediately following Chadli Bendjedid's resignation, but it was not declared. In such a case, nothing is known about the destiny of the Higher State Council, but observers noted Ali Kafi's absence from 'Id al-Fitr prayers. He also has not appeared on any occasion over the past four days. Reliable sources stress that he did not report to his

office at any time during the past few days. The reason for his absence and whether or not it is voluntary remains unknown.

Whether the anticipated coup d'etat occurs today or not, the military command seems to be forced to act quickly after the security and political policies have reached a dead end.

Ali Kafi Reportedly Resigns

LD2703210893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Following the Algerian Army's extensive movements in the country and the absence for several days of Ali Kafi, the head of Algeria's Higher State Council, rumors of a coup in the country have strengthened.

Our correspondent in Beirut reports on the latest situation in Algeria:

[Correspondent] The absence of Ali Kafi, head of Algeria's Higher State Council, from the country's political scene for a number of days, and the movements of the army in the capital on Friday night, have led to extensive rumors since yesterday morning regarding a change in the country's pyramid of power.

Following the spread of activities by revolutionary Muslims and the wave of armed attacks against Algeria's political and military officials, which have for sometime divided the country's rulers, rumors have spread vigorously since yesterday in the Algerian capital and among political circles and the people of Algeria, regarding a partial coup, the army's official takeover of control, and the coming to power of current Defense Minister General Khaled Nezzar, who has masterminded the crack-down against Islamists.

The rumors have been strengthened by the five-day absence of Ali Kafi, and it is said that he resigned from his position at noon on Saturday.

Until now Algerian officials have made no statements regarding these rumors. Published official statements indicate, however, that an extraordinary meeting of military commanders, headed by the defense minister, was held last night and that special consultations took place with American and French ambassadors in Algeria yesterday.

Latest reports from the Algerian capital indicate that the presence of military forces of the country—which have been unexpectedly stationed in public places since Friday night—has been significantly reduced and for the time being the situation seems normal.

Cheysson, EC Delegation Arrive 28 Mar

LD2803214393 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Claude Cheysson, in charge of EC-Arab Maghreb Union relations at the European Parliament, has arrived in our country at the head of an EC delegation. Cheysson was welcomed by Consultative Council Deputy Chairman Benhadouga and members of the council.

On arrival Cheysson made a statement in which he said, in particular:

[Begin Cheysson recording, in French with superimposed Arabic translation] I am very happy to be in Algeria leading a delegation from the European Parliament to the Arab Maghreb area.

This meeting this time is of a special importance on account of what we know concerning the difficulties confronting Algeria, particularly in the economic field. This prompts me to say that the European Parliament has unanimously expressed the hope of seeing these problems on the way to being solved. [end recording]

Egypt

Syrian President Visits To Discuss Peace Process

Al-Asad Arrives

NC2703101893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1009 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Cairo at noon today on a working visit, during which he will hold talks with President Mubarak.

The talks will focus on the Middle East developments, efforts to push the peace march forward, and coordination of the Egyptian and Syrian stands prior to the talks President Mubarak will hold with the U.S. Administration in Washington next week.

The Syrian president was received on arrival by President Mubarak and senior state officials.

Holds Talks With Mubarak

NC2703110493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has held talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in the Presidential Office.

The meeting was attended on the Egyptian side by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; and Egyptian Ambassador in Damascus Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz.

Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and Syrian Ambassador in Cairo Dr. 'Isa Darwish attended on the Syrian side.

Mubarak, Al-Asad Hold News Conference

JN2703204093 Damascus Syrian Arab Television
Network in Arabic 1845 GMT 27 Mar 93

["Recording" of news conference by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad with unidentified correspondents following their talks at the Presidential Offices in Cairo on 27 March]

[Text] [Correspondent] Your Excellency President Husni Mubarak: Arab citizens see a sparkle of hope and a ray of light in this unfavorable Arab reality in any meeting between Damascus and Cairo. Could you kindly shed light on the results of your talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and their impact on the future of the peace process, which is weighing heavily on the minds of people these days?

[Mubarak] I welcome my brother President Hafiz al-Asad, although he is in his own country. We always meet and exchange views on the Middle East issue, various other issues, Arab issues, as well as international issues that impact on us as an Arab nation and as two countries. In fact, we exchanged views with the brother president on the peace process. I said that we hope that the peace talks will begin on time, but there are some obstacles. We are exerting the utmost effort, and we are in agreement with President al-Asad, on the need to exert as much effort as possible so that the parties concerned can resume the peace talks on the proposed date.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad: Israel has not specified the scope of withdrawal from the Golan until now. It made this conditional on knowing the kind of peace that Syria wants. Does a peace agreement mean a normalization of relations or merely an end to the state of war?

[Al-Asad] The Syrian side has answered this question. By making these statements, Israel seeks, primarily, to obstruct the peace march. The Golan is Syrian territory and is not related to what is called, or what they are trying to focus on, the nature of peace. The Syrian foreign minister stated, as did the Syrian negotiating delegation, that we want a just peace in accordance with the UN resolutions that will ensure stability in this region that we all live in. The foreign minister said that we want a full peace, and the Israelis must say they want full withdrawal, because we want a full withdrawal. Peace is peace. There are not many interpretations for it. National territory means national territory. This is our opinion. If there is something unclear [words indistinct].

[Correspondent] President Mubarak, following your talks with President al-Asad, are you carrying a joint working paper, or a joint point of view, to your meeting with President Clinton?

[Mubarak] It is not a matter of a joint paper or not. We all share one and the same goal—to establish peace in the region. We discuss the matter to see what the impediments are. There is no disagreement on these impediments; we agree on these impediments and then go and talk about them in the hope that we can eliminate them and reach peace. So, our goal is one. We just agree on the method to deal with all the world powers so that we can reach peace.

[Correspondent] President al-Asad, did you discuss the future of the Damascus Declaration in your talks today with President Mubarak?

[Al-Asad] As brother President Mubarak briefly mentioned, we discussed many issues during our talks—peace, other parties' roles in the peace process, the sponsor's role in the peace process, the Damascus Declaration, and what is being said about it—we discussed all this. As President Mubarak said, our views on these issues are identical—we mean our ideas are identical.

[Correspondent] What are your expectations for the future of this declaration?

[Al-Asad] During my previous meeting with President Mubarak in Damascus, we both said that the Damascus Declaration is of interest to the Arabs. But if there is someone who does not welcome it, we have no objection. We hear all brothers in Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf states say that the declaration represents a need for all. As long as this is the case, we should all adopt it.

[Correspondent] President al-Asad, is Syria prepared to participate in the Washington peace talks if the Palestinians do not attend?

[Al-Asad] Since the beginning, we headed in the direction of achieving a comprehensive peace. This approach is quite clear and confirmed in the documents agreed upon by all sides, particularly the U.S. side, who launched the initiative—the U.S. plan. We want peace and we seek a comprehensive peace. I affirm now, as we did in the past, that any peace in this region, if not comprehensive, will not constitute peace and no one can make it viable. As Arabs, we are one nation. Regardless of differences in views, we are ultimately bound to be on the side of any Arab who is subjected to aggression. If we seek a peace in the interest of everyone—Arabs and non-Arabs, it should be comprehensive, any other peace will be doomed to failure.

[Correspondent] Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad...

[Al-Asad, interrupting] The response that we heard from all the others to our peace initiative was that they support the Arab side's view that the peace should be comprehensive.

[Correspondent] President Mubarak, the Arab-European dialogue improved recently, especially about the Palestinian issue since the 1981 Venice Declaration. But the European-Israeli dialogue is improving more. Will your

upcoming visit enhance this dialogue further, and will we emerge with tangible results, God willing?

[Mubarak] No, my visit will not have an impact on progress to the extent you might imagine. The improvement depends on us as an Arab nation, not on one state because we all must seek this improvement in the dialogue and stimulate it. But if we hesitate to stimulate this dialogue, we will not make any progress.

Syrian President Departs

NC2703155893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1527 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad left Cairo for home this afternoon after a visit that lasted several hours. He was seen off by President Husni Mubarak.

'Arafat Arrives for Consultations With President

NC2803164493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1634 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Cairo this evening on a brief visit to Egypt during which he will be received by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

The two presidents will hold consultations on the latest developments in the region.

Meets With Mubarak

NC2803204793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1955 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the talks between President Husni Mubarak and Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat focused on the peace process and the ongoing contacts between the Palestinian delegation currently visiting Washington and U.S. officials. The talks also focused on the obstacles facing the peace process, above all the Palestinian deportees issue.

In a statement following the two hours of talks between Mubarak and 'Arafat, Musa said the two presidents discussed all these topics with a view to advancing the peace process and overcoming these obstacles.

Musa said 'Arafat briefed Mubarak on the Palestinian stand on the peace process and the Palestinian proposals in this connection. He noted that the Mubarak-'Arafat talks were held against the background of the talks held yesterday in Cairo between President Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad as well as the talks foreign ministers of the Arab cordon states held today in Damascus.

Musa said all these talks are within the framework of preparation for President Mubarak's visit to Washington, during which he will speak in the name of the Arab parties participating in the peace process with a

view to gearing it toward a just and comprehensive settlement and overcoming the existing obstacles.

Asked whether there is a chance that the Palestinian delegation will not participate in the upcoming round of talks, Musa said: We did not discuss topics connected with nonparticipation but rather topics connected with contributing to the peace process, participating in it, and finding the appropriate ways for this.

Asked whether during his visit to Washington the president will convey a unified Arab stand on the peace process and the resumption of the talks, Musa said: Undoubtedly, President Mubarak's file on the peace process will contain the attitudes of the Arab parties, their view on the peace process, and the ways of overcoming the existing obstacles.

Asked whether there is linkage between participation in the upcoming round of talks and resolving the deportees issue, Musa said: The word linkage is perhaps inaccurate. What is accurate is that the deportees and other issues, such as the situation in the occupied territories, cloud the atmosphere of the talks. He stressed the importance of clearing this atmosphere so that the peace process will start in a suitable climate permitting progress in the talks.

Musa pointed out that negotiations are not for the sake of negotiations but for the sake of reactivating the peace process and achieving a peace agreement. He said a peace agreement will not be effective unless it leads to a just and fair peace for all parties, including the Arab parties.

Asked whether there is a new U.S. offer to the Palestinians to encourage them to participate in the peace talks, Musa said: Indeed, there are several ideas under discussion. He noted that the Palestinian delegation that will leave Washington today listened to a U.S. approach [tari] and to the results of the U.S. contacts with Israel and other parties. He said, however, he is not in a position to know the details of what has taken place so far.

Asked whether the U.S. secretary of state offered to the Palestinian delegation currently visiting Washington adherence to the six points barring Israel from resorting to mass deportations, Musa said the six points are the outcome of a Palestinian-U.S. agreement. He added that this agreement is an understanding between the two sides and not U.S. points. It is an understanding between the two sides on certain steps to deal with the deportees issue and affirm other points connected with the peace process. Musa noted that the six points are still valid, expressing the hope that the contacts will succeed in achieving a framework permitting progress in this process.

Asked whether the Arab decision on participation in the upcoming talks in Washington, especially Palestinian participation, will be postponed until after Mubarak's return from Washington, Musa said the contacts to be held, above all Mubarak's contacts in Washington, will undoubtedly contribute to making such a decision.

Meanwhile, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat will resume his talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa tomorrow.

'New Arab-Israeli War' Said Possible if Talks Fail

NC2803093793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has warned of the consequences for regional and international security and peace if the Arab-Israeli peace talks fail.

In statements to the Lebanese paper AL-DIYAR, Dr. al-Baz said that such a failure would lead the region into a dark tunnel of instability, the consequences of which would not be limited to the Palestinian people, but would extend to Israel itself. He also said that if this happens, a new war between the Arabs and Israel as a result of miscalculations or incorrect assessments by either of the two sides could not be ruled out.

[Paris AFP in English at 0924 GMT on 28 March reports al-Baz' remarks, adding: "Usamah al-Baz, adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, told the Lebanese newspaper AL-DIYAR 'the rise of extremism will trigger a process of destabilisation in the region'.

["Should the (peace) talks fail, extremist factions will gain the upper hand in Israel and elsewhere and those who pinned their hopes on peace will lose face," he said. Al-Baz, who participated in negotiations leading to the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, added: "Israel will use as a pretext the rise of (Arab) extremism to bolster its military arsenal and develop its nuclear capabilities. As a result, a new Arab-Israeli war cannot be ruled out," he said. He warned that "if pushed into despair Israel will use its nuclear capabilities.""]

Musa on Algeria Breaking Ties With Iran

NC2803095393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and his accompanying delegation left Cairo for Damascus this morning to attend the meetings of the Arab countries involved in the Middle East peace process, which will be held there later today.

The meetings, which will be attended by Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the PLO, will discuss the peace process ahead of the ninth round of the talks scheduled to be held in Washington on 20 April.

Before departing, Musa said that yesterday's talks between President Hosni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad were extremely important, adding that this importance stems from the existing conditions surrounding the peace process, the situation in the region, and Mubarak's forthcoming visit to the United States.

He said that today's meeting of the five cordon states is important for coordinating their stands on the peace talks, their resumption, and the Arab parties' participation in them.

Regarding the agreement on allowing UN forces to keep the peace in Somalia, Musa said this is an important step toward normalizing relations in that country and moving it from chaos to reorganization. He expressed hope that this agreement will be strengthened and that measures will be taken soon to establish a transitional authority followed by a permanent one in Somalia so as to protect the country's unity and sovereignty.

Stressing the importance of the European role in the peace process, Musa said: The European countries have played an important role within the Middle East peace framework, and we appreciate this role.

In reply to a question about Algeria's decision to sever its diplomatic ties with Iran and recall its ambassador in Sudan, the Egyptian foreign minister said: The terrorist tide and any operations that upset and destabilize the situations in Arab, Islamic, African and Third World countries must be stopped as a matter of general principle. He noted that no reasons have been given for the Algerian decision.

Foreign Minister Returns From Damascus Meeting

NC2803175193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1725 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned to Cairo from Damascus this evening after participating in the meeting of the cordon states; namely, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine.

Musa left Damascus after participating in the first session of the coordination meeting of the Arab parties participating in the peace process.

Says Arab Position on Deportees 'United'

NC2803191793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned to Cairo from Damascus this evening after attending the meeting of the foreign ministers of the five Arab countries involved in the Middle East peace process. He said upon arrival that he will report to President Mubarak on the results of the Damascus talks. He said all sides agree on the need for continued coordination and support for the peace process to achieve a just settlement of the Palestine question.

He said President Mubarak will explain the Arab position to the leaders of Great Britain, Germany, and the United States in light of his discussions with President Hafiz al-Asad and Yasir 'Arafat, and the results of the five-country meeting in Damascus. He said the deportees issue is an obstacle in the way of peace. He expressed

hope that the peace process will resume in a better atmosphere. He said the Arab position is united, with all sides demanding the return of the deportees. In this respect, efforts will continue to find a solution to this problem.

Musa said that during the Damascus meeting, agreement was reached to hold another meeting after further contacts and after President Mubarak returns from his tour. The Arab position toward the next round of peace talks will be determined in light of the results of the contacts and the tour.

Arabs Urged To Return to Talks To Please U.S.

NC2803152193 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Razzaz: "Full Peace in Exchange for Full Withdrawal"]

[Text] Following the Egyptian-Syrian summit in Cairo yesterday, Presidents Muhammad Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad announced that the objective of their meeting was to achieve full coordination on Arab issues. The Syrian president said the discussions focused on peace in the Middle East, cooperation within the framework of the Damascus Declaration, and other Arab issues. The viewpoints were identical, especially concerning the next stage, which will begin with the ninth round of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations in Washington on 20 April.

That Egypt and Syria have identical viewpoints on efforts to achieve just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East means that the leaders of the two countries realize the importance and seriousness of the next Arab moves. President Mubarak underlines the importance of the available opportunity for the Arabs through a negotiated peace process. He asserts that this opportunity should never be missed because there will be dire consequences if the Arabs differ or adopt contradictory positions.

For his part, the Syrian president stressed that the Arabs, even at the peak of their differences, support the aggrieved Arab. The Syrian president was answering a question posed by journalists during the joint news conference after his meeting with Mubarak in Cairo. The question was about the Arab position on the next round of peace negotiations in Washington in case the Palestinians refuse to attend the talks because of the continuing deportees crisis.

But we would like to determine an important fact: The Palestinians will not show obstinacy or adopt a different position if the Arabs—the Syrians, Lebanese, and Jordanians—decide to attend the next round of talks in Washington. Otherwise, in the eyes of Washington, Europe, and other countries concerned about the Middle East peace process, the Arabs will be responsible for obstructing the talks. This would give the Israelis a winning political card to play with. The Israeli leaders

hope the Arabs will boycott the next talks because this will draw many negative reactions, and consequently, give Washington, Moscow, and other European capitals dozens of reasons to freeze their efforts to advance the peace process.

The fact we must establish is that if the Palestinians fail to attend the Washington talks and the other Arab cordon states take the same position, this will not reflect positively on the Arabs. The opposite is true: Palestinian attendance of the next round of talks without a solution to the problem of the deportees will draw a positive reaction from Washington because it would show that the Palestinians are eager to encourage the U.S. Administration to play a more active role in the peace process. This would place the U.S. Administration before its responsibilities toward the peace process as a full partner.

The most perilous thing in the near future will be for any Arab side to adopt a position departing from unanimity toward the chance for a peaceful settlement. This is especially true because the United States, Europe, Canada, and Japan are now interested in the internal dispute in Russia. This dispute is now a chief U.S. concern because, for Washington, any negative developments in Russia will mean a serious revival of the Cold War and dissipate the hopes the Americans and Europeans pinned on the changes that brought about the end of the former Soviet Union with its totalitarian policies, nuclear arms race, and cold war with the capitalist world.

The Arabs, therefore, should be vigilant about this. They need to deal with the new development represented in the power struggle in Russia. The American and European leaders have announced their full support for Russian President Yeltsin. This means the Americans and Europeans have already decided who enjoys their support, which reflects their high interest in Russia's developments. This shows that the Middle East crisis is no longer on the top of the American or European list of priorities. The Arabs should work so as not to bring the Middle East further down on Washington and Europe's priority lists. Hence the importance of yesterday's statements by Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad. Arab behavior in the next stage is very important. We must not underestimate or belittle the perils of the next stage, and we must, as owners of a cause, also work collectively and fully coordinate the steps of the cordon states and the other Arab countries concerned in the Middle East crisis.

This week President Mubarak will hold important talks in Berlin, London, and Washington. The peace process will be the main topic. The Egyptian and Syrian positions are identical, and we are confident that there will be no dissent in the Arab positions on the peace process. This is what we see in light of the developments and the serious stage we are experiencing. The available chance for peace, no matter what the difficulties and crises, will not recur if we, as Arabs, let it slip from our hands. Some

sides do hope the chance will be missed, and we have to frustrate their dreams through vigilance, patience, and a unified Arab position.

Mubarak To Cut U.S. Visit Short by 1 Day

NC2703113293 Cairo MENA in English 1047 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Washington, March 27 (MENA)—President Hosni Mubarak decided to cut one day shorter his scheduled visit to the United States and will conclude the visit on April 6 instead of April 7, MENA correspondent here learnt.

President Mubarak's meetings with a number of Arab leaders in Cairo necessitated an earlier-than-planned conclusion of the visit, the correspondent said.

This leads to the amendment of the programme of the visit with the cancellation of some of its items.

The president will not, accordingly, meet with the members of the U.S.-Egyptian Chamber of Commerce. Nor will he address the National Press Club in the American capital, the correspondent said.

Former Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali Dies

NC2703191893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1747 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Former Prime Minister General Kamal Hasan 'Ali, aged 72, died today. A military funeral will be held for him tomorrow at the Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah Mosque in Madinat Nasr, Cairo. [passage omitted]

Explosion Rocks Square in Downtown Cairo

NC2703120693 Paris AFP in English 1202 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 27 (AFP) - A powerful explosion rocked the downtown Cairo neighborhood of al-Atabah on Saturday [27 March] morning, witnesses told AFP, but gave no details of casualties or damages.

The headquarters of the city's telephone exchange and fire department are located on al-Atabah Square.

Explosive Charge Kills 1, Wounds 3

NC2703122993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1222 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Four officers in the Civil Defense and Fire Fighting Department received various injuries today when they examined a bag containing an explosive charge. The bag was left by an unidentified person near a security forces car in the al-Atabah area of central Cairo.

Suspicious of the bag, an officer had taken it to the civil defense and fire fighting center in al-Atabah so that explosives experts could examine it.

The bag was taken to the office of Colonel 'Adil Husayn, commander of the Cairo Bomb Squad. He and some other officers started to examine and defuse it using the appropriate devices, but the bomb exploded, wounding him and three other officers. The bomb was equipped with a timer so that it would go off at a specific time.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1321 GMT on 27 March adds: "Major Samir Mansur from the Cairo Bomb Squad has died of the wounds he suffered today when a bomb he was attempting to defuse exploded. Maj. Mansur was taken immediately to Ahmad Mahir Hospital, but died upon arrival from severe facial and chest burns and internal bleeding. Maj. Muhammad 'Abd-al-Na'im of the Cairo Bomb Squad, who also was wounded in the incident, was taken to the Armed Forces hospital in al-Ma'adi to be treated for severe burns to his face and eyes. The wounds suffered by Colonel 'Adil Husayn and another officer are slight."]

Interior Ministry Blames Extremists

NC2803120693 Paris AFP in English 1123 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, March 28 (AFP)—The Egyptian Interior Ministry blamed Sunday [28 March] Muslim extremists for a time-bomb which exploded in a busy downtown square killing an officer and wounding five other policemen.

"A logical interpretation of the latest events indicates that extremist groups were responsible for this attack," ministry spokesman Jalal al-Shami told AFP.

But he admitted that the security services had no proof to confirm that Muslim extremists were behind Saturday's attack at al-Atabah Square.

According to al-Shami, the Egyptian parliament was to meet soon "to examine a comprehensive plan to combat terrorism."

Police sources quoted by the Cairo press on Sunday said the explosives used were identical to ones used to bomb a cafe in Cairo's central al-Tahrir Square on February 26 and in a March 16 attack outside the national archeological museum. [passage omitted]

General al-Shami said little more could be done to bolster security to prevent further attacks.

"Security measures have already been reinforced throughout the capital but the police alone cannot cope with terrorism," he said.

"All state institutions and associations (such as unions) must mobilise" to end the violence which has crippled the country's three billion dollar tourism industry, a major foreign currency earner, he said. [passage omitted]

Bag Thought To Contain Bomb Found Harmless

NC2803205293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2020 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—A security source at the Civil Defense and Fire Department has denied reports that explosive charges similar to the one that exploded at the Explosives Department in Cairo yesterday were found today in a public transportation bus in the al-'Atabah region.

In a statement this evening, the source explained that a citizen reported a suspicious plastic bag under a seat in a bus in al-'Atabah Square in central Cairo. It transpired that the bag contained three sticks used for lighting ships at night, and that they do not have any destructive power and have nothing to do with explosives.

A foreign news agency reported today that the security forces found explosive charges in a bus, adding that this caused panic among citizens.

Six People Injured in Aswan Bomb Blast

NC2903060593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2308 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Aswan, 28 Mar (MENA)—Six citizens, including a woman, received various injuries when an explosive device was thrown at a police car on a routine patrol on Sa'd Zaghlul Street near the railway station in Aswan.

The wounded were taken to Aswan General Hospital for treatment. Three of them are in serious condition.

Major General Sami 'Abd-al-Jawad, deputy police chief in Aswan, said the terrorists who committed the incident will not escape punishment. Their identities are known, and security forces are in the process of apprehending them.

Attempt To Bomb Cairo Police Building Foiled

NC2903154093 Paris AFP in English 1502 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, March 29 (AFP) - Explosives experts on Monday [29 March] foiled an attempt to bomb a police building in a Cairo suburb, just days after two policemen died in a bomb explosion elsewhere in the Egyptian capital, police said.

Bomb disposal personnel defused a device which an assailant had tossed at the Institute for Police Communications in Madinat Nasr, north of the capital, police said.

Police said the charge could have caused "significant losses" if it had exploded in the building where 200 people work. [passage omitted]

Gunman Kills Policeman, Wounds Another in Cairo

NC2703110993 Paris AFP in English 1046 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 27 (AFP) - A Muslim extremist gunman early Saturday [27 March] shot dead an Egyptian policeman and seriously wounded another in a Cairo subway station, police said.

The two police conscripts, who had been standing guard at al-Zahra' underground station in Cairo's southern suburbs, tried to capture a man other policemen were chasing when he opened fire on them, they said.

The policeman's death brings to 28 the number of security officials killed by fundamentalists since March 1992.

Police said they arrested Hazim Ibrahim, a house painter, and seized from him two revolvers, jewelry and 5,400 pounds (1,600 dollars). They added that he was a Muslim fundamentalist.

Police said the jewelry was stolen several months ago when extremists held up a jewelry shop in the al-Qanatar al-Khayriyah area, 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of Cairo, to finance their operations.

Fundamentalist violence has increased dramatically since March 6, causing the deaths of 28 Muslim fundamentalists, 12 policemen and two civilians.

Libya

Sudan's al-Bashir Arrives, Makes Statement

LD2703215393 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Excerpts] This evening Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council in sisterly Sudan, arrived in Tripoli where the brother leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi] was in the forefront of those to receive him. [passage omitted]

Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir gave a statement to JANA after his arrival in the Great Jamahiriyyah in which he said: I am very happy to visit the Great Jamahiriyyah after a long absence. In fact, this absence has not caused estrangement, but was due to the current conditions, and was a result of the unjust siege by the imperialist powers which made it difficult to arrive in the Great Jamahiriyyah. With regret, we have neglected linking the two countries by means of roads and effective transport which enable the facilitation of movement between the two fraternal countries, because they are among the most important elements of the union and interconnection between the peoples. The people used to rely on aviation traffic for contact. As a result of the unjust siege, the aviation traffic has stopped, and we are

now trying to take some measures that could facilitate movement between the two countries.

No matter how madly the enemies rush upon us, that must push us toward more interrelations, interconnect-edness and determination to remove all the obstacles and impediments to be able to achieve comprehensive Arab unity.

Such measures to which the Great Jamahiriya is being subjected must be sufficient evidence to convince us of the importance of Arab unity. If there were Arab unity, no country, no matter how strong it might be, would have dared to infringe on any part of the Arab homeland.

Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir is accompanied on this visit by a delegation including: Staff Brigadier General Engineer 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Hasan, Revolution Command Council secretary general and interior minister; Dr Mustafa 'Uthman Isma'il, minister of state for the presidency and secretary general of the international people friendship council; and Dr Nafi' 'Ali Nafi', minister of state for the presidency.

Holds Talks With Government Officials

LD2803140293 Tripoli Great Jamahiriya Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi] held a three-hour meeting with General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council in sister Sudan today. The meeting included Staff Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud and Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir. In addition, others attending included: the brother Secretary of the General People's Committee [GPC] of the People's Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau, the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity, the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Planning, Trade and Finance, the Secretary of the GPC for Education, Youth, Scientific Research and Vocational Training, and the Secretary of the GPC for Agrarian Reform and Land Reclamation. [passage omitted]

The meeting was used to discuss the scope for cooperation and the process of integration between the two sister countries, on the way to comprehensive Arab unity.

The brother leader of the revolution held yesterday evening an enlarged meeting with Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir. The meeting also included Staff Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud and Col. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir. [passage omitted]

The brother leader of the revolution gave a dinner banquet in honour of Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir and the accompanying delegation. [passage omitted]

Delegation Discusses Cooperation

LD2803213693 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] An extended meeting was held this evening in Tripoli attended by the brother secretaries of the General People's Committees for Unity, the People's External Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau, planning and trade, treasury, agrarian reform, and land reclamation, and the delegation accompanying General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council of Sudan. [passage omitted]

Dr. Faruq al-Bashri, secretary general for integration between the Great Jamahiriya and Sudan; brother Abbas Ibrahim al-Nur, Sudan's ambassador to the Great Jamahiriya; and a number of experts and specialists in various fields attended the round of talks. The talks dealt with examining ways of reinforcing the scope of cooperation between the two brotherly countries. They also reviewed agreements made between the Great Jamahiriya and brotherly Sudan and ways of giving momentum to the process of integration between them to serve the interest of the sons of the one Arab people in the Great Jamahiriya and brotherly Sudan.

Libya To Investigate Obstruction of Bosnian Relief

LD2603213693 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The ambassador of Federal Yugoslavia to the Great Jamahiriya told the brother leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi] that as a result of the efforts made since he was summoned by the brother leader, the international relief convoy has passed through to Muslims in Bosnia. [passage omitted]

In a letter addressed by the Yugoslav ambassador to the brother leader, it was stated that there was a complaint about the existence of obstructions on the part of the other side in Bosnia with regard to the relief convoys passing through.

JANA has learned that the Great Jamahiriya will make some inquiries about this complaint out of its international role that it has undertaken to play to reach a peaceful solution among the warring sides in what used to be known previously as Yugoslavia.

Morocco

King Hassan Comments on Elections, Sahara

LD2803094393 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 1801 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Speech to the nation by King Hassan II in the royal palace in Rabat following allegiance ceremony, with interpolations by economic officials—live]

[Excerpts] Thanks be to God and prayers and peace be upon our Lord, the messenger of God and upon his family and his companions.

Gentlemen, my beloved people: A little while ago we were in the atmosphere of the meeting of loyalty. [passage omitted]

This link was the one that has always made dialogue between you and me easy. This link was the one which started that electric current which is built on reason and wisdom first and second on knowledge of the great interest and also on what runs in the veins of all of us, namely blood that loves patriotism and dies for it—the blood that is shed for upholding Moroccan dignity whether this dignity be collective or individual.

We have insisted that today we touch on three points which are very important to the current year, in which we are in the third month. Those three points are: First the problem of drought and the original, efficient and new solutions we have tried to find to make it impossible for financial activity and agricultural work, God willing, to sustain any loss from this drought from this month to the end of the year. [Applause]

The second point is the point reached by the democratic process and what will become of the legislative elections as well as all the social conditions accompanying all these which we want—and this is necessary—to deal with.

The third point is the crowning touch, i.e. the point reached by our sacred issue, that of our Western Sahara. [Applause].

With regard to the first point, which is the loss sustained by the agricultural class from two consecutive years of drought, we have decided to earmark for this operation the equivalent of the loss sustained by farmers who particularly grow cereals and wheat, so we have earmarked 6 billion dirhams. [Applause]

This comprises 60 million working days and it will employ as of the first of April more than 300,000 workers, i.e. if we worked out that every worker has a family comprising five members this would mean that this sum will reach 1.5 million of the people of our kingdom.

How did we arrive at this number and these figures I have just mentioned? I have taken them from our statistics on the basis of which a satisfactory winter season for the grain growers is achieved. We have found that if a year ranges from middling to good, the money that circulates between the rural and urban area and in small and large markets is about six billion dirhams. This figure is the basis of the financial and commercial transactions that take place in rural areas and in the neighboring towns. [applause]

We also took into account the number of workers who would be engaged in this sector who would not have found work either before or after the harvest.

[passage omitted] Before dealing with the other two points, I give the floor to officials in agriculture, public works, and the Interior Ministry, to give you figures in front of Morocco's map and the detailed program for this work in order to enable you the participants and all my beloved people to follow this presentation which I wish at the end to be one which would bring happiness to you and to my beloved people.

[Passage omitted]

Your Majesty, Mohamed el Hadi Jebli, director of the technical affairs department at the ministry of public works, vocational training, and cadres formation, will now address you:

[Voice of official] Your majesty, the program that has been drawn regarding the sectors of roads and water stems from the long-term plan that was prepared by his majesty's government in implementation of your obeyed instructions to develop rural areas.

[Passage omitted]

In the road sector the construction of 13,300 kms of rural roads has been defined as a priority following coordination between local councils and the appropriate ministries. The first phase of this program will witness the construction of 3,500 kms of roads which are deemed as having a pressing priority to break up the isolation of rural areas and help the circulation of farming products.

Your majesty, as for drinking water, the projected target is to increase the percentage of the distribution of this drinking water to rural areas residents, using general equipment, from 15 percent at the present time to 80 percent by the year 2010.

[Passage omitted]

The overall cost of all these roads and water projects totals 94 billion centimes; this will provide 8 million working days; and the expenditure of 38 billion centimes in wages in rural areas. Peace be upon you, majesty.

Your majesty, this is Mr. Driss Toulali, director-general of local communities department at the interior ministry.

Your majesty, the programs laid down within the framework of local communities and national development regarding the operation to combat the effects of drought will enable the investment of a portfolio to the tune of approximately 100 billion centimes.

[Passage omitted]

This operation will provide 17 million working days for the benefit of 100 thousand people.

[Passage omitted]

Majesty, here is Mr. Driss Kessab, director of rural affairs at the interior ministry.

Your majesty, within the scope of the program laid down by your majesty's respected government to alleviate the burden of farming products shortage, the sectors of rural housing, rural electricity network, and elementary education will benefit from a package to the tune of 170 billion centimes.

[Passage omitted]

The implementation and achievement of these programs aim at employing the maximum of the workforce to replace lost jobs opportunities. In parallel, the program also aims to help villages settle in rural areas.

Majesty, here is Mr. Rachid Haddaoui, director-general of the national fund of agricultural loans.

Your majesty, the agricultural loans fund that enjoys your care is a public institutions that has specific characteristics, and a dual character. The fund is both a body to provide a public service and a bank for development. Each year it finances 1.45 million projects for the benefit of more than 800 thousand people, 600 thousand of whom are small farmers; the value of its current loans totals 150 billion centimes.

[Passage omitted]

Gentlemen, beloved people: You have just listened in detail to the sums of money we have earmarked for the drought which occurred for the second year in a row and which has had dire and negative consequences on our manpower and on our rural population.

I pin my hope on almighty God in that our future revenues will be capable and sufficient enough so that we broaden the extent of this program and make it much more encompassing to include even those areas which suffered about half from the drought will also receive financial support and other aid.

Beloved people and you gentlemen who are present here, you have seen that the projects which have been enumerated and described to you are not projects for unemployment; they are not projects that will be done away with after one or two years. But they are investment projects which will remain for years or even scores of years. They are projects that enable those who are engaged in them to earn their wages—the necessary wages which not only will have side benefits and other activities but also the other benefits in the way of work and activities in other fields. They will be the axis that will benefit other commercial activity, and those engaged in agricultural machinery and manual work.

Finally, the benefit of this program is: For well over nine months the workers involved here will be receiving their wages regularly as of 1 April to the end of the year or even longer, God willing, if we were able to extend it.

As I already said, there will be 60 million working days. This means 300,000 family men work—men who have at least four or five family members to support. This figure will thus benefit at least 1.5 million persons. These

people will not feel the effect of the drought or will feel that they have suffered in their agricultural or light industrial activity.

[Passage omitted]

The second point that I would like to mention here, so as to close all doors of gossip, or speculations, is the issue of the legislative elections. We would have liked to hold them as scheduled on 30 April, except that certain measures were requested in the framework of the Higher National Committee to watch over the elections. Some measures and some suggestions I consider valid and could lead us to the correct means, some measures require some time; these include, for example, the restoration and renewal of the elections lists, the reprinting of the voting paper in a different form, for instance, plastic coated, etc. and other demands, all of them have been complied with, and all of them will come into effect. Therefore, we cannot practically carry out the voting until 25 June. [applause]

We want Friday 25 June to be a day of joy, happiness, and good omen. We want it to be a day of transparency, a day of truth, a day of the bright, eloquent mirror which is capable of reflecting first to your first servant [himself], to you, and to abroad, the picture of the Moroccan citizen who is charged by his fellow citizens to truthfully perform a duty to the best of his knowledge, and to propel this honest country along the road of freedom and dignity, within the framework of the constitution and the law.

We repeat here that we want transparency and frankness; we want faithfulness and loyalty from all those who will be dealing with the elections operation, be it elected, electors, or officials from any department or ministry. [applause]

The third point is related to the issue of our Moroccan Sahara. As you know, beloved people, since 1975 we have all been working hard and incessantly, sacrificing our natural deep sleep and rest. Following these long years, these great sacrifices, the wounds that have affected every household in Morocco, as one finds a widow or orphans or wounded in every household, we stood together, myself at the front, because I always felt that your belief was a source of strength for my belief, and that my sleepless nights were rewarded by your rest, because whenever you were called for sacrifice, your answer was always: yes.

Today, there are only nine months of waiting ahead of us. As you are aware, the UN Security Council issued its resolution calling for the holding of a referendum before the end of the year. This referendum operation, an operation that would confirm our legality, will take place before the end of the year. Moroccan right will win this operation, God willing.

As God almighty loves the person who perseveres, I pray to God almighty, as from today and until the end of this year, to show guidance to all our sons who are present on the other side before the referendum date; and to help

them return to their motherland to see for themselves what Morocco is doing. [applause]

If their hearts were to be enlightened by God's guidance, and God almighty is capable of this, and they decide to come, alongside their other Saharan brothers, to ask what injustice their homeland did to them, what injustice was done by their king toward them, the answer would be similar to the one that was uttered by the prophet, God's prayer and peace be upon them: I am a generous father, and the son of a generous father.

In this way, the referendum operation might not even have to take place at all; as there would be no victor nor vanquished; believers would be spared fighting, consequently the day of polling would turn into a day of embrace among families and among brothers and sisters. [applause]

[passage omitted] If divine destiny wants us to go to a referendum, we will go to it with the belief that we will win; however, with rancor and a wound in the heart because we will get out of the battle with one with his head high and the other with a losing face. Whatever the number of losers, they will be the winners and we will all win on the land of one homeland for one future. [Applause].

These points, sirs and beloved people, are the ones which constitute now our supreme program for this year. This does not mean that the follow-up of governmental activities and daily achievements are not my concern or things to which I devote my care. Never! However, our aims and work will be focused on first: enriching those who sustained loss from the drought, particularly from the shortage of cereals, and making things easy for them with investment projects with important profits for many years to come.

Second: Opening the door wide to our beloved homeland, people and youth so as to enter a new stage in their daily life and become an example to follow and a country whose regime is imitated.

Third: Creating the suitable atmosphere for winning the referendum regardless, either through the ballot or brotherliness, in the Sahara this year God willing. What does this require? [Applause]

What does all this require from us, my beloved people. The remaining distance is not as long as the one we have crossed—it requires patience and reassurance, particularly from the point of view of social desires and claims. God knows that if I had the world's gold and silver I would have given it to you day and night. However, we can only operate by using what we possess at the present time, especially since the problem of unemployment and jobs is an international problem. We witness it even in some great industrialized countries which were driven and forced to think about job-sharing schemes—i.e. an employed person should share his or her job with an unemployed person.

Yes, the wage-earners, be they public or private employees, have the right to ask for more. Each person should work and ask for more and be ambitious, since this is prescribed by God and by our religion. However, they should think about those who have no job at all, and they are numerous. They should help us by showing a temporary social peace to enable us to create ways of easing up their problems.

However, if there is uproar and chaos in the street, such a situation would generate two things: The first one, which is an obvious one, would be to impose security and law at whatever cost. But, this would not be enough, this is not the method that I have been choosing for the past 32 years. My method is persuasion; my method is to work with everybody, hand in hand with everybody; my method is dialogue; my method is not to sever the link and cut off the power current. However, my supreme duties are to avert evil before attaining goodness. This should be clear to every official, whoever they may be and irrespective of their grievances, even if they were legitimate ones; because what we have here is as follows: There are unemployed people who have a priority; we are in the middle of an elections situation that we should not undermine and disturb; we are embarking on a fateful situation regarding the Sahara issue, for which we should remain mobilized. [applause]

May I ask these people to give me and give their country some time. May I ask them to give some time too, and facilitate the task of those whom they support politically in the future, if they are to take part in the elections, or if they take part in the government or parliament.

If the problems accumulate from these various working bodies, who will suffer from the acuteness and effect of these problems? These problems will reflect on those to whom they affiliate politically. Consequently, the work of the new spirit, and the new parliament and the new constitutional institutions would be paralyzed from birth. Beloved people, this is something against the spirit of wisdom and against the sightedness and logic that characterize you.

This framework of patience, vision, wisdom and logic oblige us not to ignore a tragedy that has happened in our country, as it happens throughout the world; an ethical tragedy. I would not like to mention it here just for the sake of mentioning it because it fouls the mouth that utters it and the hand that writes it. [reference to the sex scandal in which a police commissioner was sentenced to death by a Casablanca court for rape, debauchery and violence against hundreds of women] However, I would like to refer to it by quoting a poem by an Arab poet whose name I forget. [passage omitted]

We are proud of our Moroccan police force. [applause] We are proud of it, I, who have been dealing with it for 32 years, swear to God that it has never been unfaithful to its slogan: God, Nation, King.

There are five or six heads who should go. Because they have not been brought to justice, they should go. [applause]

The judicial authorities did not mention their names, but I know who they are. They must leave their jobs.

As for the poor traffic policeman or the one who protects homes, and whose duty is to protect each one of you when he shouts thief, thief, or policeman, policeman, one should not blame him for what had happened, because this would be unjust. [applause]

Therefore, dear people, gentlemen, let us all work within the framework of law, within the scope of social peace, within the framework of tranquility and safety, the scope of work. We are in need of work to generate wealth and distribute it to the employment sector to generate more money so that the country can witness the economic and social development to which it aspires.

In conclusion, gentlemen, it gives me pleasure to welcome you all, and especially the new elected representatives who attend the ceremony of allegiance for the first time. I would like to say to them: You are welcome and congratulations for the trust that has been placed in you by your voters. I would like to advise you to work hard, day and night, to realize the aspirations and hopes of your constituents. [passage omitted]

God's peace and mercy be upon you.

Sudan

Government Source Reacts to Algerian Envoy Recall

EA2803195593 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] An official source at the Foreign Ministry today declared his regret and astonishment over reports carried by foreign agencies to the effect that Algeria had recalled its ambassador from Khartoum on the pretext that Sudan in conjunction with other quarters was exporting terrorism to Algeria.

The source expressed Sudan's regret over this Algerian move, coming as it did at a time when Sudan was making constant efforts towards bringing about Arab solidarity and restoring unity and solidarity among Arab states, including Algeria.

The Foreign Ministry official declared Sudan's rejection of this accusation chapter and verse, saying that Sudan adhered to the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states. He also stressed Sudan's determination on the basis of Arab and Islamic fraternity to cooperate with Algeria in all matters serving to strengthen relations with that country.

Foreign Minister Meets With Iranian Ambassador

EA2903101193 Khartoum SUNA in English 1725 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 27th March (SUNA)—Foreign Minister Dr Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih discussed today, Saturday, with Iranian ambassador to Khartoum the development [of] relations between the two countries and the joint issues. The minister received a message from his counterpart, Iranian foreign minister, [who] congratulated him with [Id al-] Fitr advent, hoping [for] further cooperation for the Islamic world.

[SUNA also reported on the meeting in a second Khartoum-dated item at 0920 GMT on 28 March: "Foreign Minister Dr Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih discussed Saturday [27 March] at his office with the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran here the progressing relations between the two countries and other issues of mutual concern. During the meeting, Dr Abu-Salih has received a message from his Iranian counterpart, Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati. The message included best congratulations on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr."]

Fighting Reported Between Rival Rebel Factions

AB2703144593 Paris AFP in English 1334 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Nairobi, Mar 27 (AFP)—Fighting erupted Saturday [27 March] between two rival Sudanese rebel factions around the southern town of Kongor, leaving about 20,000 famine victims stranded without relief, a United Nations official said.

Fighters loyal to John Garang, founder of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), were battling forces of a breakaway SPLA faction led by Riak Machar for control of Kongor.

"One World Food Programme staffer has been evacuated to a safer area, and reports from our field staff say that heavy fighting is going on," said Philip O'Brien of Operation Lifeline Sudan, a U.N.-led relief programme to the south.

The reports did not specify how many fighters were involved or which faction had attacked.

Clashes Continue

AB2803204593 Paris AFP in English 1751 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Nairobi, March 28 (AFP)—Sudanese rebels on Sunday [28 March] accused a rival rebel faction of attacking their forces in the southern town of Kongor, where fighting has cut off relief supplies to 20,000 famine victims.

A breakaway faction of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by Riak Machar accused forces loyal to

the movement's founder John Garang of launching a "heavy attack" on Kongor early Saturday.

"Heavy fighting is continuing in and around Kongor town," according to a statement from Machar's "Nasir" faction which has controlled Kongor until now.

But an official of Garang's "Torit" faction in Nairobi denied the attack.

"We have no forces in the Kongor area," said George Garang, editor of the group's newsletter. "If there is fighting, it must be an internal uprising within the Nasir faction."

The Nasir faction said a United Nations official had been evacuated from Kongor and was "safe and well under the care of the Nasir faction forces."

Philip O'Brien of Operation Lifeline Sudan, a U.N.-led relief programme to the south, confirmed that a World Food Programme staffer had been escorted to a safer area and relief flights had been suspended because of fighting.

O'Brien expressed concern about some 20,000 people in the Kongor area who had started receiving food aid, including 500 children.

"Kongor has some of the worst cases of malnutrition ever seen in south Sudan, and these very serious humanitarian needs are going to go unmet until the end of the fighting," O'Brien said. [passage omitted]

Kuwait**Patriot Missiles Reportedly Withdrawn Last Month**

LD2803090593 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0719 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 28 Mar (KUNA)—Defense Minister 'Ali Sabah al-Salim stressed that U.S. Patriot missile batteries in Kuwait were withdrawn about one month ago. He said in a statement to AL-RA'I AL-AMM published here today "the withdrawal took place following an agreement between Kuwait and the United States after the Iraqi danger, which consisted in the Iraqi provocations last January, became remote."

Al-Salim indicated that the urgent need for the Patriot missiles is no longer there now that the Iraqi threat is gone.

[Passage omitted]

'All' Air Force Equipment Seized by Iraq Returned

LD2803135493 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1248 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Kuwait, 28 Mar (KUNA)—A Kuwaiti official source announced that all the air force equipment captured by the Iraqi regime during its invasion of Kuwait was returned to Kuwait at the end of January.

The secretary of the Foreign Ministry committee for the return of Kuwaiti properties, Mansur al-Ulaymi, said that the equipment was handed over to Kuwait at the al-'Abdili center. All the equipment was in poor state. Some of it requires maintenance and some could no longer be used.

He added that efforts are still being made to get territorial army equipment back. Two hundred tanks are expected to be returned in the next phase. It is also expected that Hawk missiles will be handed back by the end of April.

Joint Military Exercises With U.S. Begin 28 Mar

LD2803154893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1400 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 28 Mar, (KUNA)—The joint air exercise Eager Archer 3-93 between Kuwait's Air Force and U.S. Navy fighters began here today and will last 10 days. U.S. and Kuwaiti F-18 fighters are taking part. [passage omitted]

Kuwaiti spokesman Major Al-Sha'i said that the aim is to raise combat readiness, strengthen military exchanges, and acquire new skills. He said that the exercise is being carried out over Kuwaiti territory and international waters.

*** Chief of Staff Testifies, Refuses To Comment**

93P50116A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
19 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Nasir al-Mutayri]

[Text] Kuwait—The chief of the general staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Staff Major General Jabir al-Khalid al-Sabah, yesterday testified in front of the fact-finding committee on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and responded to a series of questions which principally touched on the true military situation that existed before and during the invasion.

The deputy speaker of the National Assembly and chairman of the committee, Deputy Salih al-Fidalah, announced that Staff Major General Jabir al-Khalid will testify again in front of the committee in its next meeting, which will be held after the 'Id al-Fitr holiday [25 March].

Al-Fidalah said in an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the committee will issue another summons for former Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, who testified before the committee two months ago and presented a long deposition about the ministry's situation during the period that preceded the Iraqi invasion.

Al-Fidalah emphasized that the committee decided to summon Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad after a series of new facts were disclosed to it during the meetings that it conducted with the Kuwaiti military leadership.

He explained that the committee also summoned Staff Major General Jasim al-Shihab, director of military operations in the Defense Ministry. He said that al-Shihab will testify before the committee after his return from a trip abroad.

Al-Fidalah affirmed that the meeting with Staff Maj. Gen. Jabir al-Khalid took place with the understanding that al-Khalid is still chief of staff of the Kuwaiti Army because the resignation that he submitted some time ago has not been accepted. He said that the chief of staff spoke at length about the situation of the Kuwaiti military establishment and answered the questions submitted to him by the deputies clearly and honestly.

Shaykh Jabir al-Khalid's testimony before the committee lasted four hours in all. He emerged at the end, saying that he was completely comfortable with the meeting, which he considers to be beneficial to Kuwaiti interests. The chief of staff denied that the committee had directed any specific charge toward him, affirming that an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation prevailed between him and the committee members. He was asked about the reasons for his resignation from his post and the ramifications, but he refused to comment.

Al-Fidalah affirmed that the committee will submit its first report to the National Assembly on 8 April and that in it, the National Assembly deputies will be acquainted

with all of the details of the committee meetings and anything connected with them.

He said that the committee will present its report to the National Assembly in secret and leave it up to the Assembly to decide whether it wants to make the report public or not.

Al-Fidalah denied that the first report includes any specific charges or claims against any person, because the committee's role is still limited to investigating and looking into the background of the Iraqi invasion.

Qatar

Minister Says State Adheres to Damascus Declaration

JN2803130593 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1125 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] Doha, 28 Mar (WAKH)—Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani has stressed that the State of Qatar adheres to the Damascus Declaration in letter and spirit, that the declaration has become a fundamental part of the Qatari foreign policy, and that Qatar adheres to its objectives and principles.

In a statement to the QATARI NEWS AGENCY today, the Qatari foreign minister stressed that the signatories to the Damascus Declaration agreed that the declaration would be the nucleus of a new Arab order based on cooperation and solidarity in accordance with the Arab League's charter. He pointed out that the principles and objectives of the Damascus Declaration are fully in line with the principles and charter of the Arab League and is a demonstration of the objectives of joint Arab action.

Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani said: Based on this firm position, the State of Qatar will invite the finance ministers of the Damascus Declaration states to hold a meeting in Doha to discuss ways of implementing the declaration in the economic field according to what was agreed on at the ministerial meeting held in Doha on September 1992.

Turkish Education Minister Arrives in Doha

TA2903113893 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 1000
GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Doha, March 29 (AA)—Education Minister Koksal Toptan arrived in Doha on Monday for a four-day visit at the invitation of Qatari Education Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abdallah al-Turki.

He was greeted at Doha Airport by al-Turki, the Turkish ambassador to Qatar, Erdogan Aytun, and a number of Qatari Education Ministry officials, the Qatar news agency said.

Toptan praised the existing relations between Qatar and Turkey which he described as "excellent" and said he

hoped relations between the two countries would see more development in the near future in all fields.

He added that his visit was aimed at deepening bilateral educational and cultural relations and creating wider cooperation to promote the interests of the two Muslim and brotherly peoples.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Contacts Qatari Amir About Health

LD2603193693 Riyadh SPA in English 1920 GMT
26 Mar 93

[Text] Jeddah, March 26, SPA—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud on Friday made a telephone conversation with Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar. During the call, King Fahd congratulated Shaykh Hamad for leaving the hospital safely following the medical tests he had undergone recently which showed that he is in good health. For his part, Shaykh Hamad thanked the king for the good and brotherly feeling he expressed and wished for him constant good health.

Prince Sultan Visits Armored Corps Center

LD2603200093 Riyadh SPA in English 1915 GMT
26 Mar 93

[Text] Tabuk, March 26, SPA—Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy premier, minister of defense, aviation and inspector general inaugurated this afternoon the new expansion project of the centre and school of the Armoured Corps of the Northwestern Military Zone. Prince Sultan, who is now visiting the region, was welcomed at the site by the commander of the Northwestern Military Zone, the commander of the Corps and other highranking officers.

The commander of the armoured centre and school, in a speech on the occasion, thanked Prince Sultan for patronizing the inaugural ceremony of the new expansion project which, he said, would be of great value for promotion of the technical capabilities of the armoured personnel of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Prince Sultan expressed deep satisfaction over the tremendous development witnessed by the centre and school and excellent performance of its graduates and personnel.

The opening ceremony was attended by Prince Fahd Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the governor of Tabuk region, many princes and senior civil and military officials of the region.

Meanwhile, Prince Sultan graced this afternoon the luncheon banquet held in his honour by the command of the Northwestern Military Zone at the institute of the armoured corps. Prince Sultan is visiting the region to convey the greetings of Custodian of the Two Holy

Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz for the citizens of Tabuk region.

Later, Prince Sultan, accompanied by the commander and senior officers of the Northwestern Zone, toured the new facilities and was briefed by the officials on the new armoured vehicle, Pirana, which has recently joined the armoured units. Writing in the visitors' book afterwards, Prince Sultan prayed to the Almighty God to keep the great boons being bestowed on the Kingdom.

He expressed hope that the Kingdom could serve Arab and Islamic nations in line with the wise directives of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces.

Yemen

Foreign Minister Leaves For UAE With Message

JN2903131293 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani left Sanaa today for Abu Dhabi on a visit to the fraternal United Arab Emirates [UAE].

In a statement to the Yemeni News Agency, SABA, the foreign minister said he will deliver a message from Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, to his brother His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE.

The foreign minister noted that he will also hold talks with UAE officials on bilateral relations and ways of developing them.

Newspaper Says U.S. Report Based on 'Lies'

JN2703093593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0700 GMT
27 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH wonders how long U.S.-allied politics will be based on the propagation of lies. The paper further asks how long will Western media remain mortgaged to lies promoted by Kuwaiti media.

In an article published today, the paper adds: Lies have become the basic food for the official media organs of the rulers imposed on Kuwait. The evidence we advance here to corroborate our argument in this regard is the fact that these rulers chose the most flagrant liar among themselves to fill the post of information minister. This liar was chosen for the ministerial post after he had managed to promote the notorious lie regarding incubators while he was the Kuwaiti delegate at the United Nations.

The paper goes on to say: The agent and ignorant rulers chose this liar for the post of information minister so that he may use his expertise, as well as his American friends, to fabricate new lies about Iraq as he did in the past, as demonstrated when he adeptly trained the ambassador's daughter to lie before the U.S. Congress and shed crocodile tears over "the incubators," a story which proved to be pure figment of the imagination.

The paper says: It is no coincidence that U.S. and Zionist radio stations promptly air all the lies and allegations fabricated by this silly minister and his U.S., British, and Zionist public relations experts, whom he is now employing at his ministry.

The paper notes that the reports recently issued against Iraq by the U.S. State Department are based on the fabrications of this lying minister, and also on the working sessions he holds with his U.S. and Zionist media experts. This episode, the paper contends, is repeated whenever the date for the Security Council's periodic review of economic sanctions imposed on Iraq approaches.

Concluding its article, the paper says: Iraqis are now immune to the deceptive Zionist and Kuwaiti media. The average Iraqi in any Iraqi city ridicules these lies, which have nothing whatsoever to do with reality. So, let them lie as they please, for Iraq is no longer interested in their fabrications. Moreover, truth will expose the lies of agents and burn their hearts as well.

Iraqis Said Not Hopeful of Security Council Meeting

JN2903091093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Mar (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH newspaper has asserted that the treacherous 30-state aggression was not a war against Iraq alone, but also against all nations aspiring for independence, liberation, and progress.

In an article today under the headline "The Blockade and Iraqi Creativity," the paper, speaking for the Defense Ministry, says: The Iraqis knew right from the very beginning that the 30-state aggression was motivated by fear of a mighty Iraq with independent decisionmaking.

Whenever it is time for the Security Council to discuss lifting the economic embargo, UN inspectors compete, along with all the sirens in London, Washington, Paris, and Yeltsin's UN representative, to declare that Iraq has not implemented UN resolutions. Those people, the paper adds, know quite well that Iraq has met all its obligations toward the unjust resolutions imposed on it, and that it has cooperated positively with all inspection teams.

The paper goes on to say: Today is the date set for reconsidering the unjust sanctions against Iraq. The Iraqis, however, no longer pin any hopes on the outcome of the meetings of the Security Council committees, because since the start of the bloody confrontation with the imperialists and Zionists, the Iraqis have been aware that the purpose of the sanctions is to strangle Iraq, paralyze its will, and make sure that it will not be a shining example for all Arab countries.

The paper asserts that since the beginning of the aggression, the unyielding Iraqis have sought to mobilize all their energies to turn the iniquitous blockade into a basis for creativity and achievements, reconstruction and progress. The Iraqis have depended on their own capabilities which left their creative imprint on every factory, plant, and bridge. All these sites have come to life again, thanks to Iraqi minds and hands, thus acquiring a purely national character, away from any foreign influence.

The paper concludes: The Iraqis are not afraid of what the enemies will decide against them, despite the suffering this is causing. The Iraqis will also not be surprised by the decisions of their enemies, nor will fabrications and lies weaken them, because they have acquired immunity and might against all that aims at subduing their will and making them abandon their principles and love for their leader and nation.

Talks With Oil Firms Bid To Persuade U.S. on Sanctions

NC2903154293 Paris AFP in English 1501 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Nicosia, March 29 (AFP)—Iraq is boosting contacts with French and other oil companies in a bid to clinch oil deals and create incentives for lifting U.N. sanctions, a specialized newsletter reported here Monday.

Representatives of Western and other oil firms, notably France's Elf and TOTAL, have paid more frequent visits to Baghdad in the past few weeks, according to the MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY (MEES).

Talks have "focussed on possible upstream agreements or crude oil sales after the sanctions are lifted," it said.

It said discussions were underway with the French companies on production sharing deals for development of some of the giant southern oilfields, with TOTAL on Nahr Umar and Elf on Majnun islands.

MEES added that "Baghdad still hopes that similar arrangements could also be made with some major American firms as a way of providing an incentive to persuade the U.S." to back a removal of sanctions.

The international embargo was slapped on Iraq four days after its August 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait and has included a ban on oil exports.

The United Nations Security Council will meet this week for its regular bimonthly review of the sanctions, which MEES said would likely be renewed.

"The U.S., backed by the U.K., France and Russia, will insist on this renewal of sanctions on the grounds that Iraq has failed to implement all the relevant Security Council resolutions," MEES said.

The Nicosia-based newsletter noted that Iraq had to date failed to comply with all U.N. resolutions calling for the elimination of its mass destruction weapons, an argument to be raised by Washington.

MEES also reported that the U.S. will insist at the embargo review session that there be "no change whatever in the provisions of resolutions 706 and 712 which impose highly restrictive conditions for any resumption of oil exports from Iraq, and will reject Iraqi efforts to have these restrictions relaxed."

Iraq rejects the two resolutions, arguing that they violate its sovereignty.

Defense Minister Visits Army Corps, Attends Exercise

JN2803204093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Fighter Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, member of the Revolution Command Council and defense minister, today visited the al-Yarmuk forces' operations sector, affiliated with the 2d Army Corps. During his meeting with the fighter commander of the 2d Army Corps, who holds the rank of staff major general, Staff Gen. 'Ali Hasan al-Majid stressed the need to derive maximum benefit from the lessons of last year's trainings to promote individual and collective performance.

The fighter commander of the 2d Army Corps reviewed during the meeting the nature of the daily training of the corps' units, as well as the advanced stages it has reached.

The meeting was attended by fighter Staff Gen. 'Iyad Futayyih Khalifah, chief of staff of the Army; his aide for

operations; and the comrade secretary of the al-Yarmuk military branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

The fighter defense minister also attended a successful exercise carried out by the brave men of the al-Yarmuk forces' air defense—an exercise which indicates effective command and rapid field performance. After acquainting himself with this creative performance, he called for doubling efforts for effective and flexible performance to epitomize the Iraqis' creative abilities.

Kurdish Authorities Find Grave With 1,500 Bodies

LD2903111493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Kurdish authorities have announced that a mass grave containing 1,500 bodies has been found in Irbil. The bodies are those of Arab soldiers who were executed by Iraqi troops either during or after the Kurdish uprising in 1991.

Further on Discovery

NC2903152793 Paris AFP in English 1500 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] London, March 29 (AFP)—A mass grave containing around 1,500 bodies has been discovered on the site of a former Iraqi military base near the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, a Kurdish opposition umbrella group said Monday.

The Iraqi National Congress (INC), repeating claims by Kurdish officials quoted by the BBC Sunday, said many of the bodies were of military personnel, who could be identified from their identity tags.

"Many of the military personnel were still wearing their identification tags," it said. "None of the bodies have been properly prepared for burial according to Islamic law."

The INC said the grave was on the site of a camp where the Iraqi Army's Fifth Army was stationed. Videotape evidence of the bodies—including soldiers and civilians—would be available by next week, the group said.

"The INC will have videotaped documentation of the exhumation and of the identification process available by 3 April," it said.

The report Monday came after Kurdish officials Sunday told the BBC that the bodies were of "Arab soldiers executed by the Iraqi Government during or after the mass Kurdish uprising against President Saddam Husayn in March 1991." The uprising came in the wake of Iraq's defeat in the Gulf war.

Irbil was the regional headquarters for the Iraqi military before the Kurds took control of the north.

Bomb Explodes at Ba'th Party Office in Jalaula'

NC2803172193 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] A time bomb exploded on Friday [26 March] at the ruling Ba'th Party's headquarters in Jalaula', killing one person and damaging the building. According to our sources, the regime's henchmen conducted an inhumane search campaign at the Kifri checkpoint.

At midnight on 23 March, two bombs went off in the homes of two of the regime's henchmen in Jalaula', but casualties are not yet known.

According to our sources, the head of the Iraqi regime sent an invitation to the criminal who carried out the horrible crime in the village of 'Uwaynah. The criminal visited the regime's presidential court on Friday to be rewarded for his brutal act.

Rebels Reportedly Kill Soldier in Attack

NC2803142393 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1330 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The Islamic resistance struggling forces delivered a successful blow to one of dictator Saddam's armored units on the road between al-Maymunah and al-'Amarah city early this month.

Reporting this, our sources in the south said that two tanks were destroyed, one regime member was killed, and others were wounded in this heroic operation. The sources affirmed that they saw the tyrant forces flee their positions leaving behind some weapons, ammunition, and military equipment, which our heroic mujahidin captured and took with them as they returned safely to base.

Kuwaiti 'Violations' in Demilitarized Zone Detailed

JN2803120193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0810 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has revealed that armed men affiliated with the regime imposed on Kuwait have perpetrated new crimes and violations in the demilitarized zone under the protection of the UN observers deployed there.

In a report, supported by photographs of several Iraqis who had been victims of various kinds of physical torture at the hands of the henchmen of the regime imposed on Kuwait, the paper noted that these crimes include abducting citizens, firing on farmers, and entering the demilitarized zone fully armed, along with the UN observers, who deal leniently with them.

The paper quoted Safwan Subdistrict Officer 'Abd-al-Amir 'Abd-al-Wahid Mubarak as saying that Kuwaiti armed men are entering the demilitarized zone with their weapons within the sight and hearing of the UN observers. He added that these armed men abducted citizens and fired at them.

Mubarak went on to say that the provocations have increased since the attempt to demarcate the borders, and that abductions and shooting at farmers have been on the increase since then.

'Alwan 'Udhayr Kanin, a resident farmer in the demilitarized zone, said that Kuwaiti armed men are conducting patrols with the UN observers in the demilitarized zone while they are fully armed. He said that last month they abducted his son Muhammad, returning him a few days later after he had been subjected to severe torture in the prisons of the al-Sabah family. The patrols of the al-Sabah family regime, he noted, also opened fire on a second son, Ahmad, wounding him, along with several other farmers.

Sati' Dahsh Lashi, another farmer, told the newspaper of similar violations committed by armed men affiliated with the regime imposed on Kuwait. He said that these violations have continued since the U.S.-allied troops' occupation of Kuwait.

In the area of Umm Qasr, the paper interviewed three citizens who had been abducted by Kuwaiti gunmen in the demilitarized zone. They were tortured for 10 days, and then, while in poor health, thrown into the demilitarized zone.

Ahmad Jabbar Miz'il, born in 1975, told the story of his abduction, saying: While collecting tomatoes on the farm, I was attacked by three gunmen who forced me, under threat of arms, into a vehicle they were driving. They blindfolded me and headed toward Kuwait.

Miz'iyl told how he was moved to various Kuwaiti detention centers and exposed to various forms of physical torture at each of these centers. He said cigarettes were stubbed out on various parts of his body, icy water was poured on him, and he was severely beaten with sticks and cables.

Wa'il Haddad Murad, a barber working in the Umm Qasr area, said that five Kuwaiti gunmen forced him into a truck, which then left for a camp where Arabs of various nationalities were tortured. Most of the torture victims were Egyptians, he said. In addition to torture, he was insulted and came under much pressure. The insults and pressure were aimed at making him slander Iraq and its leader. He added that the gunmen took his money and belongings, held him in an underground vault, and prevented him from performing prayers, saying that he is an Iraqi and that "Iraqis do not perform prayers."

Minister on 1992 Infant Mortality, Health Affairs

JN2703143193 Baghdad INA in English 1325 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 27, INA—A total of 123,463 Iraqi children, including 46,933 babies under five years, have died during the year 1992 as a result of the UN sanctions imposed on Iraq. Minister of Health Dr Umid Midhat Mubarak told ALIF BA local weekly.

The minister said the infant mortality figure for three years (1990/92) is around 250,000 adding that cases of malnutrition among children under five years amounted to 1,248,540 cases, which means a 12-fold increase compared to the pre-1990 figures.

The monthly mortality figure increased to 3,911 children under five and 6,377 children above five years, while the cases of underweight babies increased by 18 per cent, compared to the figures in 1989. The number of major operations went down by 64 per cent and lab tests fell by 60.5 per cent compared with the year 1989, because of the sanctions, during the period from 1989 to 1993, the communicable diseases increased ten folds as compared to pre-1990 figures, according to Dr Mubarak.

As for measures adopted by the ministry to confront the UN-imposed sanctions, the minister said a number of health staffers managed to ensure locally-made drugs and medical equipment that saved the country large amounts of money. The staffers also maintained and repaired thousands of out-of-order medical equipment, he explained.

The minister said that the foreign companies which built Baghdad's Saddam Medical City, have not done the job properly, adding that staffers of the ministry have managed to repair the damage in cooperation with the technicians of the Military Industry Commission and the Ministry of Oil.

In a bid to improve public services, the ministry is rendering further care for public health centres by providing them with the available medical equipment, he said. Adding that meanwhile, two nurseries are to be opened in Baghdad.

Dr Mubarak pointed out that, in cooperation with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), his ministry has launched a vaccination campaign throughout the country in the hope of reducing infant mortality rate among children under five years old. "The campaign was successful and the Iraqi mothers were helpful in responding positively to it," the minister told the local magazine.

The national campaign for vaccination has been carried out in three rounds. The first started on November 23, 1992, the second on December 21, 1992 and the third on January 25, 1993. The campaign was meant to control the spread of epidemics and reduce mortality rate among Iraqi children and expectant women. The campaign covered vaccinating some two million children including 662,400 infants and pregnant women against measles, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and tuberculosis. It also covered about 90 per cent of infants with the BCG, [bacillus Calmette-Guerin] measles and poliomyelitis vaccines. The rate of pregnant women who were vaccinated during the three stages of the campaign against dioxide tetanus reached some 75 per cent.

The campaign also covered vaccinating some 33 per cent of children of the age group 1-4 years. It has been carried out through some 850 health centres and 100 roving health teams all over the country. More than 10,000 well-trained health staffers took part in the campaign.

Saddam Allocates Money for Kurds Fleeing to Diyala

JN2903112093 Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 24 Mar 93 p 6

[Text] President Saddam Husayn has ordered the allocation of 2 million dinars to provide means of livelihood and basic necessities for the Kurdish families fleeing to the Diyala Governorate from the inferno of agent cliques in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region.

The news was given by Diyala Governor Tu'mah Du'ayyif Qitan, who added that the leader's noble initiative is a living embodiment and proof of the leader's love for his people and his care for their social wellbeing. He said the great leader wants to be reassured about their stability and peace of mind under his canopy, in a free Iraq, with united Arabs, Kurds, and other fraternal nationalities.

The Kurdish families who moved into the Diyala Governorate expressed their love for, and pride in the wise leadership of President Saddam Husayn, as well as their adherence to the Autonomy Law and Iraq's national unity of land and people.

Letter to UN Protests Recent U-2 Overflights

JN2803133493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0915 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] New York, 28 Mar (INA)—Iraq has again protested the violations of Iraqi airspace by the U.S. spy plane U-2 under the guise of conducting aerial survey for the Special Commission.

In a letter delivered to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali, Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf explained that after taking off from its base in Saudi Arabia, the U.S. plane U-2 violated Iraqi airspace on 11, 16, and 24 March. Its flights centered over large areas in northern, central, and southern Iraq, the foreign minister added.

In his letter, the foreign minister stated that these three violations have raised to 124 the total number of violations committed by this plane.

Elaborating on these violations, the foreign minister said: "While denouncing and condemning these unjustifiable violations of the sanctity of our airspace, we would like to reiterate Iraq's position in this regard, which we have consistently expressed, which is that this plane is being used for purposes other than those mandated by the Security Council, and that this plane's activities undermine Iraq's sovereignty and security."

Palestinians Said To Attend Talks 'Without Conditions'

TA2903054693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Diplomatic sources in Jerusalem and Washington say the Palestinians will attend the next round of the peace talks. The sources said the Palestinians will, in a few days, announce their intention to attend without conditions.

However, Faysal al-Husayni, who has been meeting officials in Washington, says he is still waiting for answers to some of his questions.

Envoy on 'Reservations' Over Madrid Framework

TA2803065693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador in Washington and head of the peace talks with Syria, by Sheli Yehimovich, on 28 March—recorded]

[Text] [Yehimovich] We spoke this morning with Ambassador Rabinovich and asked him whether in his view the Palestinians will come to Washington on 20 April.

[Rabinovich] The general view in Washington is that despite everything the Palestinians and the other delegations will come on 20 April.

[Yehimovich] Is the issue holding up the talks still the deportees?

[Rabinovich] Technically, it is the deportees' issue, but in actual fact it is an attempt by the Palestinian delegation, and the Palestinians in general, to improve their positions over those accepted in the previous rounds. We can call it an attempt to renegotiate the conditions agreed on in Madrid and to get a better price, but the focus is on the deportees.

[Yehimovich] What do you mean when you say to get a better price?

[Rabinovich] It is an open secret that the Palestinians came to the Madrid conference and are participating in the Madrid process according to conditions worked out in 1991 when their international image hit rock bottom following the Gulf war. During 1992 and in early 1993 they have wanted to improve those conditions. We accept the Madrid framework although we also have reservations about some of its components. For example, we are not overexcited about holding simultaneous negotiations along several tracks, and we do not believe that the package can be reopened only partially.

[Yehimovich] Nevertheless, it appears to be somewhat difficult to get rid of the deportees' issue. Is Israel considering a gesture on that or is the general view that the Palestinians will return to the negotiating table whatever happens?

[Rabinovich] Since I opened by saying that the general view here is that they will come to the negotiating table, I believe that in the final analysis that issue will not be responsible for blowing up the situation. We should also recall that the prime minister paid a visit here and discussed many aspects of Israeli-U.S. relations and the peace process, but the deportees' issue was not brought up. In other words, from many points of view, it is already behind us, although not completely.

[Yehimovich] The foreign ministers of Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, as well as PLO representatives, and the leaders of the Arab peace delegations, will convene in Damascus tomorrow. Jordan and Syria have already said that they will not participate in the peace talks if the Palestinians do not come. If the Palestinians really do not come, will this round of talks still be held or does everything depend on the Palestinians?

[Rabinovich] We believe that if the peace process has any real value and if the other Arab participants, such as the Syrians, Jordanians, and Lebanese, believe something can be gotten from the talks, then they will not want to tie their national interests to any veto. Second, we recall from earlier rounds that although there were controversies and disputes over the agenda and conditions for the talks, the final announcements from the Arab sides about their participation were issued close to the convening of the negotiations.

[Yehimovich] Yesterday, there was a meeting between Syrian President Hafez al-Asad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Later, al-Asad said that his country wants full peace and in return Israel must withdraw from the entire Golan Heights. Will we be discussing the practicalities of that on 20 April?

[Rabinovich] I hope so. We still have to see his full statement in an authoritative way, in the negotiations themselves, and furthermore, to receive clarifications from the Syrians on what that refers to precisely—the contents of the peace—in order to be convinced that it conforms with our definition. There is also a list of clarifications we put to the Syrians in the previous rounds and between rounds. If the Syrians provide us with satisfactory answers and if they behave in the negotiations—not only behind closed doors, but also in open diplomacy—according to what not only we, but also the international community, expects, then I believe there is a good chance of making progress.

Murder of Jewish Settler in Gaza Sparks Riots, Reaction

Victim Stripped

TA2803131093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Here is a report just in: A settler of Nisanit in the northern part of the Gaza Strip has been stabbed to death. The assailant was an Arab who worked in the settler's house. This is reported by our correspondent

Nisim Qeynan. At this point, the identity of the victim has not been released for publication.

Settlers Riot After Stabbing

TA2803183093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] There were serious riots of settlers in the Gaza Strip this evening. Some 200 settlers blocked the Nisanit junction and the Erez checkpoint, and damaged vehicles at the locals' parking, south of the checkpoint. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the rioters wounded a local resident, and one of them has even attacked Assistant Commander David Sade, the commander of the Gaza District Police. Army and police forces dispersed the settlers and detained two of them.

Strip To Be Closed 29 Mar

TA2803191593 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Yehuda Gawi, a 49-year-old resident of Ashqelon, was murdered this afternoon by two terrorists at the new construction site of the settlement of Nisanit at the north of the Qatif Bloc. Gawi was murdered by two workers who were building his house. The two terrorists fled to the area of Bayt Hanun and an extensive manhunt is still in progress.

Following today's murder and in the wake of the recent wave of terror attacks in the Gaza Strip, the defense establishment this evening decided to impose a closure on the Gaza Strip beginning tomorrow [29 March] morning. [passage omitted]

Parties React to Murder

TA2803194993 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Reactions in Israel to the Nisanit murder: The Tzomet Movement demands that the government assume an iron-fist policy. The movement believes that a full-time defense minister should be appointed at once.

Moledet Movement Chairman Rehav'am Ze'evi said that the Nisanit murder once again proves that Rabin's government is unable to provide security even in undisputed areas.

Tel Aviv-Yafo Mayor Shlomo Lahat ordered an immediate stop to the employment of Arab laborers from the territories in schools in the city. He urged that the inspection of school guards be stepped up.

Meretz Knesset Faction Chairman Ran Kohen this evening expressed his rage and revulsion over the murder of the resident of Nisanit by his employees. Knesset Member [MK] Kohen said that the settlers must condemn those who exacerbate the friction between Arab residents of the territories and Israelis. He called on them not to complain about the policy of the current

government, which wants to separate the Arabs from the State of Israel through a new policy of employment and economy.

MK Yig'al Bibi, National Religious Party Knesset faction chairman, said that a government that does not put an end at once to the idle defeatist chatter of its ministers and forsakes its policy of restraint will not be able to wash its hands clean of the blood that was shed. He called on the residents of the Qatif Bloc to go back on their decision to employ Arabs at this time. [passage omitted]

Responding to the prime minister's address to Labor's Central Committee, Likud Knesset Faction Chairman Moshe Qatzav said that he is convinced that if the security forces are given an unequivocal order to put an end to the murders and terror acts, they will be able to carry out the task. The Likud faction says that in his remarks today, Rabin admitted that he is unable to provide Israel's residents with personal security.

Closure of Territories Rejected

TA2903115293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres believes that the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip will not last very long. He believes that it is impossible to clamp a closure on Judea and Samaria, and that it is uncalled for. Mr. Peres made the remarks this morning when he visited Eli Glicko, a Foreign Ministry worker who was stabbed in Jerusalem last night. [passage omitted]

Commander Yehuda Wilk, commander of the Jerusalem District Police, believes that imposing a closure on the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem is undesirable. Speaking with our correspondent, he said the police activity mainly focuses on locating those who plan the attacks. According to him, it is impossible to cover the city with policemen.

This morning, Arab youths threw rocks and empty bottles at a Border Police patrol on the al-Sultan Sulayman Street in East Jerusalem. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the policemen fired rubber bullets at the rioters, wounding six who were treated in the al-Maqasid Hospital and released.

Peres on Gaza Strip Transfer, Peace Talks

TA2803181293 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Shlomo Ganor; at Peres' office on 28 March—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Ganor] The Arab foreign ministers are meeting today in Damascus. What do you expect from them?

[Peres] I expect them to persuade the Palestinians to come to the negotiations, since this is their position.

After all, their position is that the Palestinians should go back to the negotiating table. I hope they succeed.

[Ganor] How will the next round of peace talks differ from the previous eight rounds?

[Peres] Many obstacles on the way to peace have been removed, such as the question of the settlements, the subsidies to the settlers, the law banning contacts with the PLO, and the elections. We even touched upon the question of land and water and established some sort of link between the temporary and the permanent solutions; namely, UN Resolutions 242 and 338. We must now get down to business.

[Ganor] What do you mean by getting down to business?

[Peres] I mean determining the final arrangements for the transfer of self-government to the Palestinians. In fact, we have told the Palestinians that wherever there is a Palestinian there will be autonomy, that wherever there is communal Arab life the land will be managed by the Palestinians themselves. We must now proceed to deal with the remaining problems, such as the elections, the make-up and size of the autonomy council, and internal security—all the other issues on which we have not yet reached an agreement.

[Ganor] Sir, do you still insist on your proposal that a solution must be found to Gaza first?

[Peres] I have no doubt whatsoever that we should not remain in Gaza. Gaza must be handed over to the Gazans, who should be left to run their own lives, and it is best to do that through mutual agreement. Look, as long as the Israeli Government is responsible for Gaza it is not only responsible for the security of the people but also for their economic and social welfare. We cannot afford to wake up one morning and get out of Gaza leaving behind chaos, confusion, a Lebanon-like situation, murder, and so on. We want to hand Gaza over in an orderly and mutually agreed manner, and the sooner we do that the better it will be for all the sides.

[Ganor] To whom would you hand it? Should the PLO leadership be allowed to settle in the Gaza Strip and run it, as the Meretz ministers proposed?

[Peres] In my opinion, Gaza should be handed over to the inhabitants of Gaza. At one time there was a municipality in Gaza, and during Egypt's tenure there was actually an elected council, a sort of parliament or quasi-parliament, something which is also proposed in the autonomy plan. I believe this is the best way.

[Ganor] Would this be done apart from the autonomy negotiations?

[Peres] No, it would be done as part of the autonomy negotiations.

[Ganor] Mr. Peres, could you set a target date for the transfer of the Gaza Strip to the Gazans?

[Peres] Not at all. I cannot set a target date because this is not just up to us; there is another party to the negotiations. I would like to reiterate my hope that the negotiations be conducted at an accelerated pace. We truly want peace, we truly want the Palestinians to be good neighbors of ours and to feel good. All those stories that we want to harm and harass them are totally unfounded. If we consider the Palestinians our neighbors, then we want to see them in good condition and this should be attained through mutual agreement.

[Ganor] Mr. Peres, Gazan spectators watching you now are wondering when they will see the aforementioned Palestinian leadership.

[Peres] It is largely up to them, to their emissaries and negotiators. For our part, there is willingness and even determination on this issue.

[Ganor] Will the Israeli Government, the Israeli negotiators, display a new approach when they get to Washington on 20 April?

[Peres] There is a series of positive measures which the Palestinians know are awaiting them once the negotiations resume. It has been suggested to them that Israel would be willing to meet them halfway on several issues.

[Ganor] Such as?

[Peres] Such as the link between the interim and the permanent arrangements, a future link between autonomy and Resolution 242, and similar matters.

[Ganor] What is your position on Minister Yosi Sarid's remarks that without ceding Israel's sovereignty in the Golan Heights there will be no peace with Syria?

[Peres] All in all, we are striving for a comprehensive peace; that is, for peace with all the Arab and Palestinian sides on all issues. All the stories that we want to make progress with the Syrians at the expense of the Palestinians and with the Palestinians at the expense of the Syrians are totally unfounded. We want to make progress wherever we can make progress because we do not want the opponents and those lagging behind to determine the pace of the negotiations. Therefore, the negotiations will be held with all the delegations—the Lebanese, the Syrians, the Palestinians, and the Jordanians. We will make progress with those with whom we can make progress. At this stage, proposals will be submitted through the pertinent delegations.

Identity of Bodies Amal Offers To Trade Questioned

TA2803134493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Amal leader Nabih Birri says his organization would be willing to hand over the bodies of two Israeli prisoners in exchange for the release of hundreds of Arab prisoners held in the al-Khiyam prison in south Lebanon. Speaking to a REUTER correspondent in his village, Birri said Red Cross personnel would be allowed

to check the two bodies if all the women held prisoner in al-Khiyam are released. [passage omitted]

Israeli defense sources told our correspondent Yo'av Aviv there is no certainty that the bodies mentioned by Birri are those of Israeli soldiers.

Amal Offer Rejected

TA2803172493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Israel is rejecting the offer made by Amal leader Nabih Birri to allow an examination of two bodies his organization is holding in return for the release of the female prisoners held in the al-Khiyam prison in south Lebanon.

Israeli sources told our correspondent Yo'av Aviv that Israel cannot accept this demand, and only if Birri allows an examination of the bodies with no reward, and if it becomes apparent that the matter is practical, Israel will do all that it can to strike a successful deal. The sources warned against entertaining illusions, saying that we have to try to use the current atmosphere to reach a deal that would include the POW's as well.

Minister Calls Peace While Retaining Golan 'Pipe Dream'

TA2703121493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Minister Yosi Sarid says peace with Syria will remain unfeasible as long as Israel retains sovereignty over the Golan. According to him, such peace is a pipe dream.

Minister Sarid added that in signing the peace agreement with Egypt, Menahem Begin in fact determined the terms of peace with Syria. He stressed that this government—unlike Begin's—will insist on a phased peace agreement stretching over many years. This will allow Israel to foil any planned aggression on the part of its neighbors.

The minister's remarks were reported by our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling.

Reaction to MK's Comments

TA2803120293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Report by Shlomo Raz]

[Excerpts] The cabinet took time out to discuss matters that are not currently making the headlines. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, we asked the ministers for their reactions to the very detailed remarks by Environment Minister Yosi Sarid supporting a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights in return for full peace. Let us hear Yosi Sarid, and then 'Uzi

Bar'am, minister of tourism and religious affairs, and Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur.

[Begin recording] [Sarid] There was no reaction in the cabinet to my remarks, in fact there was no political debate at all today. I have not said anything new on the issue, it has always been my position, and I repeat it whenever asked about it. I do not think I have to beg the question, and I do not think I have to lie to myself. I said what I have always thought, that sovereignty is less important. The essence of the peace and security in the region is much more important.

[Bar'am] I am not opposed to Minister Sarid, and even view his remarks in a positive light. If I was negotiating and believed that the situation called for it, I would definitely support it. I am not so sure it is politically wise to say so today, therefore I do not say it every second day, but in essence I understand what full peace with Syria means. We must think hard about the issue of defense lines. I said the same things when the law annexing the Golan Heights was passed. Withdrawal would, however, have to be the last thing to decide if we achieve peace. I do not think it in any way contradicts the policy the government will have to decide on, but tactically I suppose the cabinet will not make haste to act on it.

[Tzur] I believe those positions are contrary to the basic stand of Labor and the government. It is a grave mistake for ministers to take such a position even before entering negotiations. It is naive to believe that negotiations with the Syrians will be easy. An a priori readiness to something like that is dangerous. The prime minister has repeatedly stated that Israel would be prepared to discuss territorial issues and a withdrawal of military forces on the Golan heights and not from the Golan. I believe such remarks damage the steadfastness which will be called for during the negotiating process. [end recording] [passage omitted]

General on Goodwill Gestures in Territories

TA2603200693 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Studio interview with Major General Dani Rothschild, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, by Dani Levi on 26 March—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Levi] Maj. Gen. Rothschild, is Israel prepared to implement goodwill gestures toward the Palestinians if they attend the peace talks in Washington?

[Rothschild] First of all, I hope that all the parties attend the talks scheduled to begin on 20 April in Washington. I assume that the issue of goodwill gestures, like the entire subject of human rights, will come up for discussion, as it always has in the past, and I hope that as in the past, we will be able to adopt a positive attitude toward this matter and release people and improve conditions and human rights whenever security considerations

permit. We have done this in the past, and I hope that we will be able to do it this time as well.

[Levi] In light of the present situation in the territories, can Israel really carry out such goodwill gestures toward the Palestinians?

[Rothschild] In principle, the situation in the territories with regard to the majority of the population definitely permits gestures and an easing of conditions. This is not the situation vis a vis those individuals who opt for terrorism and shoot or stab civilians inside Israel and in the territories. However, as far as the rest of the population are concerned, gestures are definitely possible and if the security situation permits, we shall also implement them.

[Levi] Major General Rothschild, could the Palestinian delegation's participation in the peace talks reduce the level of violence in the territories in your opinion?

[Rothschild] I assume that on the one hand, for the majority of the population that is interested in the continuation and success of the peace talks, the convening of the delegations in Washington symbolizes a continuity, which could be translated into a reduction of the level of violence in the field. At the same time, I imagine that there is a group of people whose sole purpose is to derail the peace talks. We must be prepared to stop those individuals who will continue to attempt to sabotage the talks.

[Levi] Is the Civil Administration attempting to expand economic activity in the territories to reduce the number of Palestinians working in Israel?

[Rothschild] The Civil Administration, as part of a policy that has been implemented for the past two years, has called for greater investments in the territories eventually to create more jobs. Additional sources of employment will ultimately reduce the number of laborers who need to work in Israel every day for their livelihood. At the same time, I would like to say that even if the Israeli Government does not decide to close off the territories tomorrow morning, the number of laborers in Israel may be significantly curtailed, if only because Israeli employers may begin to think twice before employing Arab workers—and thus running the physical risk of being stabbed or attacked in some other way—and to consider whether they should rather employ Jewish workers. At any rate, in the near future the number of workers permitted to work in Israel will be cut back. I very much hope that the between 100,000 to 120,000 laborers who need to work in Israel daily understand that those isolated individuals that use knives or firearms to attack Israeli citizens are also harming those approximately 120,000 Palestinians who

only want to return home with their wages at the end of the day. I hope that the voice of those 120,000 workers will eventually be heard and that they will ultimately oppose or even prevent the phenomenon of terror in Israel's streets.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish a better year to all my listeners everywhere, and I am full of hope that when we celebrate this holiday next year we will be able to look back and say that 1993 was the year in which we achieved the desired breakthrough.

Netanyahu-Led Likud May Draw Labor Voters

TA2803125893 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew
28 Mar 93 p 9

[Editorial: "The Victory of the New Right Wing"]

[Text] Binyamin Netanyahu's victory reflects a significant shift in the Likud. The Likud is no longer based on the traditional alliance between ETZEL leaders and Betar [pre-state military underground organizations] nationalists on the one hand, and underprivileged Sephardim and the classic middle class—joined by Liberal Party supporters who were later ground to dust—on the other. The traditional leadership has been erased and the control passed on to the new right wing led by Bibi Netanyahu.

The new right wing, symbolized by Bibi Netanyahu, has defeated both Beni Begin's ideological devoutness and the representatives of the underprivileged strata, David Levi and Moshe Qatzav. With one fell swoop, it managed to erase two generations of leaders—the old-guard generation of Shamir, Arens, and Levi, and the interim generation represented by Meridor, Milo, Olmert, and Beni Begin. It has also erased the image of Menahem Begin, marking a departure from the obsolete party structure based on neighborhood activists and private political recruitment.

To sum up, it can be said that the old-guard leaders and their successors never noticed that the party was being stolen from them. The outcome of the battle was determined already in its preliminary stages when Bibi Netanyahu managed to attract tens of thousands of new party members through charisma, shallow messages, and personal scandal—but mainly with television appeal, good timing, and campaign financing unavailable to his rivals. There is no doubt that the public's present low opinion of the government, the absence of progress in socioeconomic spheres, and the absence of progress toward peace, have all strengthened the Likud voters' feeling that besides casting their vote for a Likud leader, they were electing the next prime minister.

In the wake of this choice, the next general election may reflect changes in the traditional voting patterns, based on socioeconomic characteristics. If Netanyahu fails to forge an alliance with the David Levi camp, tens of thousands of voters from the underprivileged classes may abandon the Likud. On the other hand, it is obvious even now that the Likud under Netanyahu's leadership will manage to draw votes from the well-off middle classes, the urban jobholders from Giv'atayim to Haifa, who traditionally voted for Labor and the left wing. Netanyahu will present an attractive leader's image

exuding vague, unthreatening messages remote from pledges of allegiance to both banks of the Jordan River and other radical slogans.

If this government fails to organize in time, if it acts on the assumption that it has unlimited time to combat unemployment, poverty, deficient education, and faulty immigrant absorption system, it may suffer a downfall similar to that which the French left wing is experiencing these days. Therefore, unless the center and the left wing launch political and personal preparations toward new political structures, it is liable to be overthrown.

Cabinet Reshuffle Expected Within 'Three Weeks'

JN2903130393 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] A cabinet reshuffle is expected in Jordan within the next three weeks. Dhuqan al-Hindawi is the most likely candidate to succeed al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, who has been prime minister since November 1991.

The reshuffle is necessary as the November parliamentary elections draw nearer. Political norms require that ministers who wish to run for election should resign, so that they would not use their post for publicity.

At least 12 out of 28 ministers in the present government are expected to run for the forthcoming elections. Al-Hindawi, 65, is currently the deputy prime minister and education minister. He held several cabinet posts and was chief of the Royal Court for four months in 1989. Although al-Hindawi is currently a member of parliament, he does not plan to run in the coming elections.

Prime Minister Returns From Portugal Private Visit

JN2803212493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir returned to Amman this evening following a six-day private visit to Portugal. The prime minister was received at Amman Civil Airport by Dhuqan al-Hindawi, deputy prime minister and minister of education, and Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, minister of state for cabinet affairs.

Paper Comments on Anticipated U.S. Statement on Iraq

JN2803112193 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic 28 Mar 93 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "A Strange U.S. Change"]

[Text] If THE WASHINGTON POST report citing U.S. officials turns out to be true, the Iraqis, all Arabs, and all peoples and nations will then have the right to demand the trial of U.S., British, French, Russian, and Chinese officials as war criminals who committed racist crimes

against the Iraqi people. They destroyed their accomplishments, killed their children, executed their sick, and are continuing their hateful war against them.

THE WASHINGTON POST said that the new U.S. Administration may issue a statement tomorrow ending linkage between the dismissal of President Saddam Husayn and the lifting of the embargo imposed on the Iraqis. This means that everything to which the Iraqi people were exposed, beginning with aggression and embargo and ending with the continuing war of annihilation against them, was aimed at toppling President Saddam. This also means that personal rancor and grudges led to war crimes against a people simply because their enemies did not like this people's president or his face. We do not believe mankind has witnessed or could possibly witness in the future a war crime of such magnitude and ugliness.

Such a change in the U.S. position may be the first step demanded from President Clinton's administration in order to put an end to the policy of grudge and racism practiced by his predecessor Bush against all the Iraqi people, including their leaders and masses; soldiers and children; women, elderly and sick people; and antiquities, trees, and accomplishments. The present administration's realization of the need to go back on the previous administration's policy opens the door for a real end to the feelings of rancor, anger, and extremism which are boiling within our hearts in this region whether due to the magnitude of the crime that is continuing against us, or to the amount of contempt expressed by the capitals of the five big powers in practicing everything except abidance by the simplest values and principles.

None can deceive us into believing that the United States' leadership of the alliance of evil was meant to deal a blow to President Saddam Husayn alone. It was aimed at the entire Iraqi people. Moreover, this alliance was not formed and financed nor did it commit crimes in order to remove a revolver from Saddam Husayn's hands, it was formed to end the Iraqi people's capability, might, and progress. The aim was not to rescue Shaykh Jabir and his family, but Israel and its plans and future. Therefore, any U.S. statement issued tomorrow ending linkage between President Saddam's stay and the lifting of the embargo will only mean the continuation [as published] of the war of annihilation against the entire Iraqi people. This continuing hateful and racist war has right from the beginning been against these people and continues to be so. To say that Saddam Husayn is not included is a silly joke that can be told only once.

Buwayz Comments on Vatican Official's Visit*NC2803061093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 28 Mar 93*

[Excerpts] Jean Louis Tauran, the Vatican's secretary for relations with states, arrived in Beirut at 1800 yesterday. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who received the Vatican guest at the airport, said the visit demonstrates his holiness the pope's concern for Lebanon and the Lebanese. Buwayz said that the talks will touch on peace in the region and the progress Lebanon has made on the road of establishing security, stability, and national unity. Buwayz had the following to say in reply to questions by correspondents:

[Begin recording] [unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, what about Monsignor Tauran's visit to Lebanon?

[Buwayz] Naturally, We welcome Msgr. Tauran in Lebanon. This visit undoubtedly demonstrates his holiness the pope's concern for Lebanon and the Lebanese. We know Msgr. Tauran because he spent a long period in Lebanon, and his love for this country helps him to understand Lebanon's crises. This visit will pave the way for us to review a number of political issues. We will discuss the issue of peace in this region and also the steps that Lebanon has made to consolidate security, stability, and national unity.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, you will leave for Damascus this evening to take part in the cordons states' meetings there. What can you tell us about these meetings?

[Buwayz] The meetings of the foreign ministers of the states participating in the bilateral talks will assess the current situation, particularly the problems and hurdles facing the resumption of serious negotiations concerning the peace process. The meeting, no doubt, will be held under extremely critical circumstances requiring careful assessment of the negative and positive aspects of participating in the talks.

We will definitely adopt a unified stand on this issue. [end recording]

Buwayz Leaves for Damascus Meetings on Peace Talks*NC2803061793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 28 Mar 93*

[Text] The cordons states' foreign ministers will discuss in Damascus today the future of participation in the upcoming round of peace talks.

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who left for the Damascus meeting yesterday, said that the ministers will adopt a unified position on the issue and assess the problems and obstacles facing the resumption of further negotiations on the peace process. Buwayz said that the current atmosphere requires painstaking appraisal of the negative and positive aspects of participating in the talks.

Buwayz: U.S. Approach on Talks 'Devoid of Threats'*NC2803123093 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1130 GMT 28 Mar 93*

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that the international climate, particularly the climate in the United States, leans toward serious support for the peace process. He noted that the implementation of the resolution [not further specified] is a feature of a negative [as heard] atmosphere that will continue to exist.

He said that the U.S. approach is devoid of threats [ba'idun 'an al-tahdidat] and that the U.S. policy is based on flexibility and the conviction that the parties concerned should sit at the negotiating table to find suitable solutions. He ruled out the possibility that developments in Russia will affect the Middle East peace process.

Birri Offer To Exchange Bodies for Detainees Reported*NC2903062693 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0430 GMT 29 Mar 93*

[Text] REUTER reports that Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has offered to trade the bodies of two Israeli soldiers for the detainees held by the [South Lebanese Army] militia.

In a telephone call to REUTER, Birri said he would allow the Red Cross to examine the two corpses once all the female prisoners in the al-Khiyam prison are released.

Citing an Israeli source, REUTER said the Israelis doubt the Amal Movement has Israeli soldiers' bodies, because there are no missing Israeli soldiers. The source added: Let the Red Cross examine the bodies first, then we will talk.

In another development, the Islamic Resistance has announced that its men detonated an explosive charge under an Israeli occupation military convoy in al-Ahmadiyah-Kawkab yesterday afternoon. According to the resistance, a troop carrier was burned and all its passengers were either killed or wounded.

Al-Asad Returns to Damascus After Talks With Mubarak

JN2703202093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad returned to Damascus this evening at the end of a visit to Cairo during which he held talks with His Excellency Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned with his excellency the president.

His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad held three meetings with His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, one of which was a closed meeting between the two presidents. The last two meetings were attended on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and Syrian Ambassador in Cairo Dr. 'Isa Darwish. On the Egyptian side, the meetings were attended by 'Amr Musa, foreign minister; Safwat al-Sharif, Information Minister; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, director of the president's office for political affairs; and Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz Mursi, Egyptian ambassador in Damascus.

Lunch was served during these meetings. Discussion dealt with the situation and the developments in the region in general, and with the Arab state of affairs. Special attention was given to the peace process in the region, and the obstacles hampering it at present, particularly the deportee issue, and the ways to eliminate these obstacles.

The two sides also emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination between Syria and Egypt and the importance of the united Arab stand on the peace process, a stand which is committed to Arab rights and the foundations on which the peace process was originally based.

Commentary Views Cairo Visit

JN2703165893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Within the framework of the march of cooperation and coordination between the two sisterly countries, Syria and Egypt, and in order to confront the current challenges and secure the higher pan-Arab interests, President Hafiz al-Asad is having talks in Cairo with President Husni Mubarak dealing with latest developments in the region and the peace process in light of U.S. commitments and assurances and Israeli obstacles.

It is known that Syria and Egypt have made continuous efforts with the influential parties in the international community, including the United States, with the aim of reaching a solution to the Palestinian deportee issue on

the basis of Security Council Resolution 799, which called for an immediate return to their homeland and guarantees for their safety.

The Israeli repression which is dangerously escalating in the occupied Arab territories raises the concern of the two fraternal countries, Syria and Egypt. Rabin's government deliberately sought to provoke Palestinians and Arabs on a large scale and to give Zionist settlers a free hand in committing crimes, destroying areas, burning houses and property, and terrorizing innocent inhabitants.

The two countries, as well as all Arabs, agree that the only objective of these brutal Israeli practices is to abort the peace process and make the Washington talks collapse. Hence, the meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak is very important. The ninth round of talks is imminent as it has been decided to begin them on 20 April. The foreign ministers of the Arab cordon states will hold their coordinating meeting in Damascus tomorrow to make a final decision on participation in these talks. It is a pan-Arab necessity that the Arabs reach a unified position and strategy to deprive the Israeli rulers of the chance to abort the peace process and avoid its requisites, foremost of which is the withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, and to enable the Palestinian people to determine their future.

Every Arab knows that Rabin's government has deported hundreds of innocent Palestinian citizens and escalated killing, repression, and terrorism in the occupied territories with the aim of exploding the situation, obstructing the Washington talks, and pushing the U.S. Administration to back down from its pledges and commitments, whether concerning the exchange of land for peace or the realization of a comprehensive and just settlement on all fronts that is based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

Neither Syria nor any Arab party would have participated in the Madrid conference and the Washington talks without U.S. pledges and commitments. During the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Damascus sought reiteration of these pledges and commitments. President Clinton announced that the United States will assume the role of full and effective partner and that he is looking forward to serious talks and substantial results. It is important to test the U.S. position and its seriousness, and to show the international community its responsibilities and not give Israel the chance to abort the efforts of one and half years of work for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak will give all their attention to the peace process and the removal of Israeli mines from its way. This requires finding a solution to the Palestinian deportee issue that is based on Security Council Resolution 799. Their efforts will also deal with reaching a unified Arab position. The unity of an Arab position is the basis and the guarantee. Dealing with the presented issues from a comprehensive pan-Arab concept is the viable way of dealing with the problem. The

international community can ignore the demands of this or that Arab country but it cannot ignore the unified demands of Arab countries.

Despite the tendentious efforts aimed at deceiving the U.S. Administration and pushing it to a strategic alliance with Israel, the Arab homeland, and its nucleus Syria and Egypt—and through its huge human and material capabilities and unique and vital strategic location—constitutes an effective force that influences the world's events and developments. The role of this force and its influence increase to the extent Arabs stick to a unified position, their rights and lands, and their emphasis that there will be no relinquishment or bargaining, and that peace in the Middle East is linked with the implementation of the resolutions of the international legitimacy in full, ending the Israeli belligerence, returning all the occupied territories to their owners, and respecting the rights of the Palestinian people.

The talks of Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak, as all previous talks, will serve the Arab causes and the higher interests of the Arab nation, and will give the Arab position more dynamism, vitality, and firmness. The peace that the Arabs want is an honorable, strong, and comprehensive one. This peace fully eliminates occupation, puts an end to the sufferings of our Palestinian people, and allows tens of thousands of refugees to return to their homeland.

Undoubtedly, the Damascus coordinating meeting which will be held tomorrow, will entrench the unity of the Arab position, emphasize the constants of the just and comprehensive solution, and show the international community its responsibilities, responsibilities it should have shouldered decades ago.

Outcome of Visit, Peace Requirements Viewed

JN2803110293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0603 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Press review]

[Text] Press editorials underscore the importance of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad's Cairo visit, as well as his talks with His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

The newspaper AL-BA'TH says: This visit was part of the ongoing consultations between the two fraternal countries. The talks stressed the need for bilateral coordination as well as the importance of a common Arab stand in the peace process.

AL-BA'TH underlines His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad's statement to reporters that we are seeking a comprehensive peace. AL-BA'TH believes that any regional peace settlement that fails to be comprehensive would not be conducive to true peace. Such peace will not be viable and will inevitably be doomed to failure.

AL-BA'TH notes the Arab affirmation that the success of the peace process is contingent upon a favorable Israeli

response to international resolutions, which spelled out the requirements for a just and comprehensive peace.

AL-BA'TH points out that Israel has thus far failed to declare a commitment to implement UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, and 425. Indeed, the paper notes, Tel Aviv has sought to circumvent resolutions and wrest everything from the Arabs in exchange for nothing.

The latest UN resolution Israel has rejected, AL-BA'TH says, has been Resolution 799, which provides for the repatriation of Palestinian deportees. This is a defiance of the entire international community, the paper notes.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: A just and comprehensive peace has its basic components and requirements. Once Israel declares a commitment to meet these requirements and help create these components, then it will be possible to achieve peace.

For its part, the newspaper TISHRIN says: His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad's visit to Cairo yesterday acquires exceptional importance, given the circumstances in the region in general, and the peace process in particular. This visit has given Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Muhammad Husni Mubarak the opportunity to review a host of issues related to advancing the peace process.

TISHRIN notes the Arabs' concern for rendering the peace negotiations a success—a position which sharply contrasts with Israel's growing intransigence and efforts to torpedo all peace initiatives. Hence, the paper adds, this requires the direct intervention of Washington, given that it is the direct sponsor of the negotiations. Such intervention should seek to deter the Tel Aviv rulers.

TISHRIN reviews the methods Israel is using to sabotage the current peace opportunities and flood the region in a sea of violence, foremost among which are the war it has been waging against the Arabs of the occupied territories, its rejection of UN Security Council Resolution 799, which provides for the repatriation of the Palestinian deportees, not to mention its public rejection of the principle of trading land for peace.

TISHRIN adds: Washington's position is a cause of concern, for Rabin returned from his Washington visit with enhanced determination to demolish the foundations of peace. This casts doubt over the full partner premise set forth by Washington. This is because the initial applications of this premise have proven to be unsatisfactory to the Arabs.

TISHRIN goes on to say: President Hafiz al-Asad's Cairo visit was to achieve the same objective sought to be achieved by the Damascus meeting, which will bring together the foreign ministers of the Arab parties concerned with the peace process, due to convene today. This objective is to lend the Arabs further strength and confidence in the confrontation of their enemies. Also,

this visit has contributed to the formulation of a clear stand in both capitals with regard to the moves that need to be made vis-a-vis the peace process. This visit has also strengthened Syrian-Egyptian coordination and enhanced the Arabs' ability to proceed with the peace battle.

Arab Ministers Begin Coordination Meeting

'Unified Position' Urged

JN2903065993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Mar 93

[From the press review]

[Text] TISHRIN speaks about the obstacles being placed by Israel in the way of the peace process, stressing the need to come up with a unified Arab position to deal with the current circumstances.

The paper says: The foreign ministers of the Arab states involved in the peace process began their coordination meeting in Damascus amid circumstances that require from the Arab delegations to the Washington talks a unified position to overcome Israeli obstacles and end the serious stepped-up terrorist, suppressive practices in the occupied Arab territories.

After reviewing Israeli obstacles, including the deportation of hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland and Israel's noncompliance with Resolution 799, TISHRIN says: When Israel found itself in a tight corner, besieged from all directions, and unable to pursue its policy of maneuvers and deception or continue its games to evade the requirements and elements of peace, it began to create obstacles in a bid to strike at the very foundations of the peace process and undermine its bases.

TISHRIN adds: Being aware of the Israeli aim, there is no doubt that the Arabs should adhere to their position and approach in order to deny Israel the chance and avoid the traps which Israel is trying to set for the peace process, to destroy it.

The paper asserts that exposing Israeli policy is part of a unified, constant Arab position based on the essential elements of the peace process, and not on being carried away by reactions whose results, possibilities, and calculations are known beforehand to Israel.

TISHRIN concludes that a unified Arab stand stemming from a great concern to advance the peace process will undoubtedly force Israel to comply with the elements of a just and comprehensive peace and will therefore eliminate the traps set for the peace process.

Deportee Issue To Figure Highly

JN2703072193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Press review]

[Text] The newspaper TISHRIN today editorializes on the unity of the Arab stand in light of Israel's intransigence and procrastination over the peace process, saying: The foreign ministers of the Arab cordon states, who will meet in Damascus tomorrow, will conduct an objective assessment of the peace process, and also of the prospects for a breakthrough in this process in light of U.S. pledges and commitments and Israeli obstacles.

TISHRIN affirms the importance of cornering Israel and exposing its spurious peaceful intentions, and also of confirming the sincere Arab efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement on all fronts of the conflict—one that is based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, and the principle of exchanging land for peace.

TISHRIN calls for putting the international community before its responsibilities. The paper further affirms that the Arabs are truly seeking peace. However, what they want is a just and lasting peace that would put an end to injustice, oppression, and Israeli criminal practices, and that would also restore to them the territories occupied by force in 1967.

TISHRIN indicates that the deportee issue will figure highly in the Arab foreign ministers' deliberations, adding that Israeli attempts to circumvent Security Council Resolution 799 are inextricably linked to its disobedience of the resolutions of international legitimacy passed scores of years ago.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN says: The Damascus meeting will once again reaffirm the unity of the Arab stand, the existence of common concerns, and the existence of agreed courses of action. There will be no separate deals, nor will there be partial settlements. Regardless of the efforts that they could make, Israeli rulers will fail to achieve their objectives in this regard. As for the Arabs, they are well aware that the restoration of their territories and rights is contingent upon their unity and solidarity, and also upon thwarting attempts to sow dissension within their ranks.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH also comments on the regional state of affairs in light of Israeli practices, which are undermining the Middle East peace process, and several issues related to this process, wondering whether the ninth round of Middle East peace talks will make any progress in the interest of the overall peace process.

The paper contends that an answer to this question is contingent upon two basic issues: namely, the removal of obstacles and barriers placed by Israel in the path of peace, and changing the circumstances and atmosphere which permeated the previous rounds of talks.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The deportee issue has remained unresolved. Israel still refuses to repatriate the deportees. Besides, there is a deliberate escalation in the murder of Palestinians in the occupied territories. Having been armed and bent on taking part in efforts to squash the intifadah, settlers are now involved in terrorist acts. Moreover, the aggressions against Lebanon are persisting.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: Changing the circumstances and atmosphere of the talks is the job of the United States. The U.S. Administration is required to take an unmistakably clear and unambiguous stand toward Israel's refusal to implement UN resolutions, and also toward the war of extermination Yitzhaq Rabin has been leading against the residents of the occupied territories since his return from Washington, thanks to the results of this visit.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The U.S. invitation for talks must be coupled with the removal of Israeli obstacles. Moreover, aid to Israel must be made contingent upon Israeli compliance with UN resolutions. In case Israel rebels against international legitimacy, proper sanctions must be imposed against it.

Lebanon's al-Hariri Arrives

NC2903062293 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Media sources have said that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri arrived in Damascus from Paris last night. He will discuss the peace process with Syrian officials.

Egypt's al-Baz Denies Israeli-Syrian Agreement

JN2903113193 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0958 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Damascus, 29 Mar (SANA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, political affairs adviser to the Egyptian president, has refuted all allegations, circulated by some people, concerning a separate agreement between Syria and Israel. He stressed that the talks are proceeding in parallel on all fronts, and that what has been achieved on the Syrian front is not more than what has been achieved on other fronts.

In an interview with TISHRIN, Dr. al-Baz expressed confidence that Syria would succeed in steering the talks with Israel toward agreement on a suitable formula that protects Arab rights whether in Syrian territories or on other fronts to achieve a comprehensive settlement. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Hekmatyar Said Insistent on Mas'ud's Resignation

BK2703120893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1151 GMT 27 Mar 93

[By Terence White]

[Text] Chahar Asiab, Afghanistan, March 27 (AFP)—Afghanistan's prime minister-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar is still insisting that his arch rival defence minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud step down, an aide said Saturday.

"We insist that the new defence minister should be a personality who did not take part in the last clashes, and is one who enjoys the trust of all parties," said 'Abdol Saboor, an official of mostly Pashtun Hezb-e Eslami factions.

A Hezb guerrilla in the Kabul frontline was more forthright.

"If Mas'ud does not step down fighting will start again," he said.

Hekmatyar was said to be present at his Chahar Asiab headquarters, located about 25 kilometres south of Kabul, but engaged in discussions with visiting mojahedin delegations.

Saboor said Hekmatyar would not personally speak with journalists until after a meeting of all the mojahedin faction leaders has been convened.

Saboor would not comment on who Hekmatyar will nominate for the crucial post of Afghan defence minister.

"Until now no definite name has been proposed," he said.

Mas'ud and Hekmatyar, who have fought two bloody battles in Kabul since the April 1992 mojahedin victory over the Afghan communist regime, are long-time rivals who few Afghans or outsiders seriously believe can reconcile their differences and coexist in peaceful harmony.

As agreed in the terms of the March 7 peace accords signed in Islamabad, Hekmatyar as prime minister gets to nominate the cabinet—in consultation with the president and other mojahedin leaders.

Mas'ud, from the predominantly ethnic Tajik Jamiat-e Eslami faction, can expect support from President Borhanoddin Rabbani, who is also the Jamiat leader, but can count on little sympathy from the majority of other mojahedin leaders.

"If the leaders insist that Mas'ud step down, he must do so and we are going to support the wishes of the majority of leaders," said Saboor.

"Mas'ud will not be able to oppose all the (mohajedin) organisations if they decide the minister of defence should be another person" added Saboor.

The mojahedin leaders are expected to meet Monday in the vicinity of Kabul, in order to come to grips with the thorny issue of cabinet selection.

A previous meeting, held last week in the eastern provincial capital of Jalalabad, and hosted by Hekmatyar, failed to resolve the problem of naming a new cabinet.

Senior defence ministry officials are cautious in their estimation of the success of Monday's expected talks.

"According to the past record we are not optimistic about these talks because in 14 years of Jihad (Holy Struggle) no concrete solutions to our problems have been found, but nevertheless we are hopeful of a positive result," the government official said.

Kabul was relatively peaceful Saturday, the 20th day after the signing of the Islamabad ceasefire agreement, and no rockets were reported exploding in the northern suburbs, although in south Kabul the situation was tense.

At Kote Sangi, Hazara fighters of the Shiite Hezb-e Wahdat faction claimed they are shelled daily by their Pashtun adversaries, the Ittihad-e Eslami faction led by Rasul Sayyaf.

Sheltered in their bunkers with machinegun posts on all corners, they warned of the dangers of the harassment shelling, and pointed out craters from the morning's mortar bombardment.

"They fire on us early morning and night, when they are sure there will be no journalists around to witness their crimes," the Wahdat commander said.

"In this place, we have no ceasefire, but we only fire when they engage us first," the commander added.

Iran's Borujerdi on Problems Facing Afghan Peace Plan

LD2603151393 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1315 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Mr. Borujerdi, Iran's deputy foreign minister for Asian and Oceanian affairs, told reporters before leaving Kabul that Afghanistan faces executive problems because several agreements signed by the group leaders have not been implemented.

Mr. Borujerdi said that in the future Iran and Afghanistan will negotiate on executive problems and peace agreements.

He added that as a neighboring country Iran will not spare any efforts to helping end the problems facing Afghanistan.

Stresses Need for More Talks

LD2603185493 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] At the end of his trip to Afghanistan, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, the Iranian deputy foreign minister for Asian and Oceanic affairs, stressed the need for the continuation of talks until the establishment of permanent peace.

In an interview with our reporter, Mr. Borujerdi added: As a neighbor of Afghanistan, Iran will not spare any efforts to end Afghanistan's problems.

He emphasized: What is important in Afghanistan today is the issue of implementing the Islamabad agreement. The main obstacle to the agreement is the fact that all the groups are armed and that heavy weapons are positioned in Kabul.

On his talks with General Dostam, the deputy foreign minister said the fact that Afghanistan's national Islamic movement is not represented in the Islamic government could be a source of trouble.

Stressing that reconstruction in Afghanistan needs international mobilization, he said the return of Afghan refugees is taking place according to the regulations of the tripartite committee of Iran, Afghanistan, and the United Nations.

India**Delhi Plane Hijacked en Route to Madras**

BK2703085893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] An Indian Airlines plane going to Madras via Hyderabad with 192 passengers on board was hijacked soon after it took off from Delhi airport this morning. The airbus is now grounded at Amritsar as Pakistani authorities refused permission for it to land at Lahore. All the passengers and crew are safe. According to Indian Airlines spokesman, the lone hijacker is demanding 40 day's political asylum in Pakistan and permission to hold a news conference in Islamabad. He also demanded a contact with the Pakistani High Commissioner in New Delhi. The hijacker's name is reported to be Hari Singh, son of Ganeshlal of Jhajhar in Haryana. Agency reports say that he has claimed that explosives are strapped to his body. Senior police officials, including the DGP [Director General of Police] of Punjab, Mr. K.P.S. Gill, and civil aviation officials have rushed to the Raja Sansi Airport in Amritsar.

Our Chandigarh correspondent quoting official sources at Amritsar says that the hijacker wants he should be taken to Delhi where he would put all the demands before the government [sentence as heard]. He also wanted that the whole case be investigated by Interpol. He threatened to blow up the plane with explosives strapped around his waist if the demands are not met with. Our Chandigarh correspondent adds that Mr.

K.P.S. Gill has gone near the plane and had a talk with the hijacker over radio phone. The passengers have been served with breakfast, water, and other eatables.

Incident Ends in Surrender

BK2703125493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The hijacking drama of the Indian Airlines flight IC-439 from Delhi to Madras has ended. The lone hijacker surrendered to the police authorities at Raja Sansi Airport in Amritsar this afternoon, where the plane had earlier been flown. The hijacker has been taken into custody. All the passengers and crew are safe and are being sent to Hyderabad and Madras from Amritsar. An agency report from Amritsar says no explosive was found on the hijacker's person.

The flight from Delhi to Madras via Hyderabad with 192 passengers and 11 crew on board was hijacked this morning soon after it took off from Delhi airport. The airbus was grounded at Amritsar after Pakistani authorities refused permission for it to land at Lahore. An Indian Airlines spokesman said that the lone hijacker's name is reported to be Hari Singh, son of Ganeshi Lal, of Jhajhar in Haryana. Senior police officials, including the Director General of Punjab police, Mr. K.P.S. Gill, had earlier reached Raja Sansi Airport to deal with the situation.

460 Arrested in 'Major Crackdown' in Calcutta

BK2803155493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] In a major crackdown on antisocial elements Calcutta, police today arrested 460 persons from different parts of the city. One hundred and nine live bombs, four revolvers, two pipe guns and ammunition were recovered.

Bombs, Grenades, Rifles Seized From Calcutta, Bombay

BK2703144693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] In Calcutta, the police today recovered 78 bombs from different places of the city. Of these, 60 were recovered from the Panighat area near the Ganga and nine from a college premises. Quoting police sources, our Calcutta correspondent reports that eight cars belonging to the prime accused in the city's explosions have been seized.

The Bombay police today seized 500 detonators, 200 hand grenades, and 3,270 rounds of AK-56 rifles and arrested eight more persons in connection with the city's blasts. According to a police spokesman, 26 persons have been arrested so far in connection with the explosions.

State Chief on Pakistani Role in Bombay Blasts

BK2803061293 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network
in English 1615 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar tonight said investigations had conclusively proved the Pakistan hands behind the recent Bombay blasts which claimed more than 250 lives. Mr. Sharad Pawar made this confessional disclosure while seconding the political resolution at the AICC [All India Congress Committee] session at Surajkund.

Troops on Kashmir Border With Pakistan on 'High Alert'

BK2803164893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1639 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] New Delhi, March 28 (AFP)—Indian troops in Kashmir have been put on alert amid fears that large numbers of Muslim militants are planning to sneak across the border with Pakistan, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Sunday.

The news agency quoted official sources as saying they had received reports that 3,000 to 5,000 Pakistani-trained Muslim militants planned to sneak across the Line of Control dividing Indian- and Pakistani-held Kashmir.

Troops had been put on "high alert," additional checkpoints had been set up and patrolling intensified along the 790-kilometer (493-mile) Line of Control, PTI said.

It said troops within five kilometers (three miles) of the border in several districts had been ordered to shoot on sight anyone violating a night curfew.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Muslim militants waging a campaign for the secession of Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority state.

Pakistan denies the charges but publicly expresses support for the secessionist campaign, which it describes as a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars since independence in 1947 over Kashmir.

Prime Minister Meets Visiting DPRK Vice President

BK2703022293 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information
Service in English 1518 GMT 26 Mar 93

["Press statement"]

[Text] DPRK vice-president, H.E. [His Excellency] Yi Chong-ok visited India as special envoy of DPRK president from March 25 to 27, 1993. Delegation included H.E. Cho Kyu-il, vice foreign minister of DPRK, and other official of DPRK Foreign Office. Request from DPRK for visit of special envoy pre-dated by several weeks current deterioration of situation in Korean peninsula.

DPRK vice president met prime minister [PM] on 26 March and conveyed his message as special envoy of DPRK president. Message reiterated invitation from DPRK president to PM to visit DPRK and expressed DPRK interest in an early visit. DPRK vice president and prime minister also had an exchange of views on bilateral relations and international situation, with particular reference to recent developments in Korean peninsula.

DPRK vice president also had a meeting on 26 March with vice president, who hosted a private dinner in his honour. He also paid a courtesy call on president, who had paid an official visit to DPRK in 1992 as vice president.

During discussions, both sides expressed satisfaction at spirit of friendship and cooperation which characterised bilateral relations between two countries. DPRK side explained its position on current situation on Korean peninsula and circumstances leading to its withdrawal from NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty]. Indian side noted that this was a sovereign decision of DPRK. However, it was hoped that current difficulties and temporary setback to inter-Korean dialogue would be got over soon as re-unification of Korea would be a very important positive factor for world peace and particularly for peace and stability in Asian region.

On NPT itself, India side noted that 1995 review of NPT would provide an opportunity for amendments necessary to give NPT an universal and non discriminatory character like chemical weapons convention which was essential for achieving progress towards genuine non-proliferation.

Congress-I MP's Express Confidence in Rao Leadership

BK2603162893 Delhi All India Radio Network in
English 1530 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Twenty-six Congress-I MP's have urged the party men to further strengthen the leadership of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao to ensure that he is not constrained in implementing the congress agenda. In a statement in New Delhi today, these MP's said when the Congress is weakened by internal dissension, it results in the weakening of the nation. They expressed the hope that the party under the leadership of Mr. Narasimha Rao will combat the forces of disruption, disintegration, and fanaticism of any kind. The signatories to the statement include Mr. Guru Das Kamath, Mr. Satya Narain, Mr. Sajjan Kumar, Mr. Surendra Singha, Mr. R.R. Sahu, Mr. Virendra Kataria, Mr. Narain Singh, and Dr. Abrar Ahmad.

The Congress-I MP's from Orissa have reiterated their full confidence in the leadership of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, both as the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party and as the president of the Indian National Congress. A resolution to this effect was passed by the members of Congress-I Party in parliament from Orissa at its meeting in New Delhi today. The signatories to the resolution are Mr. Girdhar Gomango, Mr. K.P. Singh

Deo, Mr. Subhash Chandra Naik, Mr. Sriballav Panigrahi, Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi, Mr. Manmohan Mathur, Mr. Sharat Chandra Patnaik, Mr. Gopinath Gajapati, Mr. Khagapati Pradhani, Mr. Tarkeshwar Patra, Miss (Fido Toplo), and Mr. Santosh Kumar Sahu.

Fourteen Congress-I MP's from Tamil Nadu have said that Mr. Narasimha Rao should continue to lead the party and the government at this critical juncture the nation is passing through. In a joint statement issued in New Delhi today, they said the one-man, one-post demand is not only irrelevant but also prejudicial to the interests of the country and the party. The signatories to the statement include Mr. K.V. Thangabalu, Mr. C.K. Kuppuswamy, and Dr. P.V. Peruman.

Iran

Jannati Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon 26 Mar
LD2603155593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1040 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Friday prayers second sermon delivered by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati at Tehran University on 26 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] Let us have a look at the previous year, let us see what sort of year we had so that we can use the experiences of the previous year for the tasks of the coming year and the future. Last year was a bad year for us regarding the enemy's plots and their crimes. Around one year has passed since the start of the events in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Enemies committed the worst crimes against Muslims during the year. One group carried out the crimes, another supported the criminals, and yet another was satisfied and remained silent. They encouraged them with their silence. There were only a limited number of Islamic countries, led by the Islamic Republic of Iran, that grieved for the oppressed, defended them, and supported them to the best of their abilities. They supported them politically, socially, and financially, in their propaganda and the like. It is fair to say that in this holy Islamic republican system, there were no shortcomings and that everything possible was done in their support. If there were shortcomings, they were insignificant. [passage omitted]

We hope the situation improves. Of course, negotiations are taking place now. The enemies of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Muslims, the enemies of the independence of that country as an Islamic country, are now sitting down and deciding the fate of that country. Unfortunately, the officials of Bosnia itself are following suit because they have no choice, because they have to. They do not have the power to resist forever and the enemies who are plotting are not prepared to grant them their rights. In any case, after resistance, they are gradually signing these agreements. But this is not the end of the story, signing these agreements is not the end of the story. Let the enemies know it will not end this easily.

The other issue we had last year was the deportation of the dear Palestinians. Of course, Palestinians had been deported before, but this case was the most critical. They resisted, they did not leave, Lebanon did not accept them—and well done—because taking them would have meant accepting that crime. They remained on that land and disgraced the Americans and Israelis yet again. They are still a very sharp publicity knife, they are exposing those who claim to support human rights, the oppressed and deprived. Their presence in exile is a very clear expose and a disgrace for the so-called supporters of human rights. Therefore, this tragedy has turned into a blessing spiritually. [crowd chants: "God is Great!" "Khomeyni is the Leader!" "Death to the counter-revolutionaries!" "Death to America!" "Death to the monafeqin!" "Death to Israel!"]

The other issue concerns the large-scale and extensive, and perhaps even unprecedented, propaganda campaign against the Islamic Republic by Western countries. This issue was indeed stated clearly by the honorable president, His Excellency Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in his sermons during Qods [Jerusalem] week. He expounded the issue extremely well. I recommend that his sermon be translated into various languages and distributed throughout the world by Iran's representatives and by those who can publish them. It was an excellent expose of that issue. [passage omitted]

In any case, it all comes back to the issue of Israel being officially recognized. They have laid the groundwork for its recognition by various countries. Only the Islamic Republic remains opposed to the peace talks. Pressures are being exerted from various corners on the Islamic Republic to give up its opposition. All accusations will stop if it gives up that opposition. It will no longer be accused of terrorism, of human rights violations, of abusing women's rights, and of infringing on the rights of the minorities in the community. All these issues will disappear. The Islamic Republic, however, cannot endorse an injustice that has been in force against the oppressed Palestinian people for over 40 years. It cannot remain silent in the face of that injustice, which has also affected others and is the source and cause of all future acts of injustice.

The Islamic Republic cannot be expected to put its signature on this peace agreement, or at least adopt silence now that they are bent on demolishing those homes, and are turning their backs on these deportations and aggressions. That is incompatible with Islam. The Islamic Republic would have to change its name if it wanted to do such a thing. It cannot be a Muslim community and concede to such an injustice. To let them conquer Islam's first qiblah [Jerusalem; the first direction toward which Muslims prayed], occupy the ancestral land of Muslim Palestinians, exercise all kinds of injustice against these people and make them homeless? And then to sit and sign an agreement to mean that all that they have perpetrated does not matter. Thank you very much. You killed. Thank you very much. You made

them homeless. Thank you very much. You took over their homes. Thank you very much.

Just as stated by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani and re-emphasized by the eminent leader: The issue is not only that: well, all right, if they came and signed this, then we can draw a circle around Palestine and say: all right, Israel will remain in this circle and it is a country that has been recognized and its international rights must be observed. That is definitely not the issue. Anyone thinking that the issue would end there, is totally out of the picture and very naive. The issue is that very issue of [the area] from the Nile to the Euphrates. The issue concerns the Middle East region; it concerns the oil wells; it concerns a unique strategic region; it concerns Islam and Muslims—that is to say, everything that belongs to Muslims. Therefore, no faithful and committed Muslim and Islamic state could possibly endorse such talks. And all those who are persistent in this matter should know that the Islamic Republic is not easily shaken. [crowd chants in support: "God is great!" "Khomeyni is the Leader" "Death to the usurper Israel" "Death to America" "Death to the monafeqin" "Long live Islam"] [passage omitted]

How long can they [arrogant powers] coat their lies with attractive colors? How long is it possible to cover up the dirty and filthy face of a false report? Someone writes a book and they publish it in millions and write in it that Iranians take a bath only once a year, and that happens during their New Year. Very well. God be praised that now it is the New Year and you all have taken a bath, let us wait until next year! How long can you sustain such lies? How long can you deceive people? They write lies in a book, it is documented and published and it is quite clear that America is perpetrating such acts. [passage omitted]

The resolution issued by the European Parliament is a blatant falsification. One wonders how people who pretend to understand so much, can sit down and say such things and how people believe them? They have included six or seven articles in that resolution, one more disgraceful than the other. They claim that women's rights and the rights of minorities are being violated in Iran. So many minorities are living here and everyone respects them and no one says anything against them. They are living their lives the same as everybody else. They are involved in trades, buying and selling, living and run their own business and no one knows who is a minority who is a majority. Then they sit there and say the rights of minorities are violated or terrorism has been supported. [passage omitted]

Who supports terrorism? We ourselves have received the severest of blows from terrorism. You find a state that has received so many blows from terrorism. We lost a president in terrorism, we lost a prime minister and the head of our Supreme Court and the head of our police. So much pure blood has been spilt from people in Friday prayers and here and there. Would we come and support terrorism? You are the one who are fostering them

there. [reference to Iranian opposition in the West] You are providing them with mangers and are currently preparing them for your future mischievous actions. You do not support terrorism; but we who suffer from it, support terrorism.

Waves of propaganda attack are initiated from everywhere. One of them the New York blast. An explosion takes place there, and between ourselves and between our God, I clearly think that it is possible that Israelis are responsible for that blast, or American agents are behind it. The blast did not cause harm to America. There was some financial damage, which does not count for America. Now they want to take the greatest propaganda and political advantage of the incident. They come and arrest a Jordanian Muslim of Palestinian origin. His defending American lawyer says the police were under pressure to bring him under investigation and the police has arrested him to preempt being accused of incapability. [passage omitted]

That is one thing. Then, there is all the propaganda: saying, he used to go to this or that mosque, and so on. Now, they have found another Egyptian Muslim, handed him in. He has given them a list. They are carrying out propaganda in that regard. They have created such a climate for Muslims in the United States that people did not dare for quite some time to say that they were Muslims. This happened in a so-called free country. Then, there was all the settling of scores. Then, there was the forgetting of everything else, using this issue over the Israeli peace talks, using this issue in order to draw a curtain over Clinton's ineptitude and his ineffectiveness in the early days of his presidency. So on and so forth. And it is not over yet.

They just decide to attribute it to Islamic fundamentalism and then they follow this or that turning to link it to the Islamic Republic of Iran, to take political advantage. I will not say anything more. They can do what—that was the way things were last year [Iranian year ending 20 March] for us. What must we do now? That which we should plan for our new year and for our future—first, I should really express my gratitude to you dear people; there are people in this country who, whenever they were needed by the Islamic Republic of Iran or, to put it another way, whenever they were needed by Islam, have not failed to respond. [crowd chants in support] [passage omitted]

Our enemies should be certain that our people cannot be defeated. People, who on religious anniversaries, are filled with emotion and cry uncontrollably and who pray to God and beseech God, will never be defeated. The enemy is mistaken. You cannot defeat them. They have risen up and are prepared to offer their lives for Islam. You should not imagine that you can defeat them with your propaganda and with your lies. You can upset them, you can annoy them, but—now, too, they are planning once again to pull out a few terrorists from their sleeves and send them here to carry out their mischiefs. It is important, in this connection, that all the people

should remain vigilant and that officials and security organizations should be very vigilant. I would like to thank all our officials and organizations for safeguarding our security so well thus far. God be praised. Despite their [enemies'] lies, security prevails throughout the country.

During the Ten Days of Dawn they promulgated a lie—I heard it myself—saying, yes, there has been an assassination attempt against the president and a number of people have been killed and so on. They go as far as that in their lies. Then, more recently, around the Jerusalem Day ceremonies, they promulgated more lies about an explosion. But our people will not be frightened off by such things. You cannot deceive people endlessly with your lies.

In brief, our duty is—in the very first place, complete reliance on the Koran and on Islam, which give us strength and honor; they give us everything. We must not display any weakness with respect to the commands of the Koran. [passage omitted].

In the second place, there is the question of solidarity. Do not do anything that will divide us. God be praised, so far in this country we have not had a problem with parties. It can really be a bad thing because it can create divisions. Sometimes, some people try to flex their muscles, they create a group under some name or other. Then, another group is formed in response to it elsewhere. This kind of thing does not have a happy outcome. I am certain that this can be harmful. Let us seriously avoid anything that smacks of divisiveness, whether it be domestic divisions among ourselves or divisions with others, with other Muslims, and let us try to bring people together. Let anyone who is in a position to do so, try to uproot divisions. That is another duty.

Our other duty is vigilance in the face of plots as I have already pointed out. They are plotting in any case. They might take some action somewhere, but that does not matter. We are not scared of anything like this. There have been precedents and we have tolerated worse than this. We have answered worse plots. Let them do what they like. We will rely on God, we will beseech God, we will cry, we will express our weakness at the feet of the Almighty so that we are not humiliated in the face of God's contemptible servants; this is what you must do. Vigilance of the people and officials is needed.

Time is running short, there is another point and I should not waste time. The authorities and officials must take care. They must close all doors that might lead to the enemy's infiltration. This needs careful study to see which doors the enemy uses, which excuses they can use, which tools might the enemy use to sow discord among the people, to separate the government from the people. They must study this carefully and close the doors to the enemy.

Let me just point out one case, the people must be served. The people's servants, the same people that the imam rightly referred to as the parents of our blessings, those people who are in positions of authority because of

the blessing of this people, must serve them rightly. If they serve them well, we need not worry about separation of people and officials at all. Our people will always be devoted. Let them [officials] take care so that dissatisfaction does not surface. Well, certain things are natural, nothing can be done about them. Our people are honorable and kind, they do not expect anything extraordinary from anyone. But those tasks that can be performed must be performed. Care must be taken as far as possible so the people are happy. God's satisfaction comes from this people's satisfaction. [passage omitted: concluding prayers]

Russian Foreign Minister Arrives for Visit

LD2903055093 Tehran IRNA in English 0533 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 29, IRNA—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev arrived here on a two-day official visit early Monday [29 March] and was welcomed at Tehran Mehrabad airport by deputy foreign minister for Euro-America Mahmud Va'ez.

Kozyrev is accompanied by two parliamentarians, Moscow Friday prayer leader and several other officials.

He will sign an important document regarding long-term Tehran-Moscow cooperation.

Speaking to IRNA upon arrival, the Russian minister said that during his stay in Tehran he will hold talks with Iranian authorities and discuss the articles of the document on future bilateral relations in all domains.

He added that the document also deals with important regional issues including the issue of bilateral cooperation for guaranteeing stability in the region and combating terrorism and sabotage.

He regretted that the level of bilateral economic relations is low and hoped that after signing the document, bilateral economic and trade ties would be further upgraded.

Underlining that there is a large Muslim community in Russia, Kozyrev said that Islam can turn into a factor of cooperation between Russia and the Islamic Republic.

During the visit, Iran and Russia are also to ink other documents on consular relations and permanent views exchanges between the two countries' Foreign Ministries.

The Russian minister will meet with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Meets With Velayati

LD2903105693 Tehran IRNA in English 1037 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 29, IRNA—Visiting Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Monday [29 March] exchanged views on Tehran-Moscow relations, regional issues and major international developments.

Velayati said at the meeting that both Iran and Russia should exploit all their capabilities to promote and strengthen bilateral relations in various fields.

Reiterating the significance of formation of a proposed Caspian Sea littoral states cooperation organization, Velayati expressed hope that it would be established soon.

Kozyrev, who arrived here early Monday at the head of a high ranking delegation at the invitation of Velayati, urged that both countries do all within their power to expand mutual relations in political, economic and cultural areas.

He said the time was ripe for promotion of religious relations between Tehran and Moscow and underlined that the presence of Moscow Friday prayer leader in his delegation indicates Russia's desire to upgrade its cultural and religious ties with Iran.

The Russian foreign minister called for joint cooperation between the two countries in security area, anti-drug campaign and for providing the required facilities for Iranian and Russian citizens wishing to travel to each others' countries.

Kozyrev, too, underlined the importance of the proposed Caspian Sea cooperation organization and of cooperation among the coastal states in economic and ecological fields and proposed that an expert meeting to that effect be held in Moscow next month.

The Russian official, pointing to the importance of the strategic region of the Persian Gulf, noted that his country was for continuation of stability and tranquility in that sensitive region.

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan Republics over Karabakh enclave was another topic discussed by the two who called for a peaceful settlement of the issue.

Before their official talks, the two foreign ministers held a 45-minute negotiations privately.

Meets President, Discusses World Issues

LD2903145893 Tehran IRNA in English 1408 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 29, IRNA—President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev here today expressed concern over continuation of unrest in regional countries particularly in Tajikistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He said that given the large Muslim populations of such areas Muslims should not feel that following the collapse of communism in what used to be the Soviet Union there are still certain powers seeking to undermine them.

"This can in the long run lead to Muslims losing their trust in and sincerity towards these governments and can be finally detrimental to the region and the whole world," warned Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

He expressed hope that Kozyrev's visit to Tehran and his agreements with Iranian officials would be in the interest of the Iranian and Russian nations, the region and the world.

The president said that the common interests of the two countries particularly in the Caspian Sea required them to make maximum use of their capabilities for progress and development.

Iran and the Russian Federation are respectively situated on the southern and northern shores of the Caspian, the world's largest inland sea. The other three countries having access to Caspian waters are Azerbaijan on the southwest, Turkmenistan on the southeast and Kazakhstan on the northeast.

Kozyrev who arrived here this morning heading a top level delegation, described Iran as a "strong country" and a "friendly neighbour" with whom Moscow desires to expand cooperation and ties.

According to him the Islamic Republic and Russia share common interests in the region and that in view of Tehran's outstanding regional role both countries could cooperate in restoring peace and stability in some regional countries.

The Russian foreign minister termed the presence of the Moscow Friday prayer leader in his delegation as a "turning point" marking the beginning of religious ties between the two countries.

He said he will also follow up talks held earlier between authorities of the two countries aimed at signing an important agreement on long term cooperation.

News Conference Held

LD2903182593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT
29 Mar 93

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation have signed three documents outlining diplomatic and consular ties and the bases for cooperation between the two countries.

According to a Central News Unit report, the documents were signed by Velayati and Kozyrev, the foreign ministers of Iran and Russia, in Tehran this afternoon.

After signing the documents, the foreign ministers of the two countries held a joint news conference at which they

answered questions from reporters about mutual, regional, and international issues.

At the news conference, stressing the importance of the ties between the two countries, Mr. Velayati said that this visit was aimed at strengthening mutual ties. Regarding the agreements reached and the documents signed, he said: The first document concerns the establishing of regular political consultations between the foreign ministers of the two countries. Under that agreement the salient points and method of those consultations have been outlined and, for the purpose of political consultation, exchange of diplomatic delegations at various levels has been envisaged.

He added: The second document is a consular document, the most important clause of which is the abolition of visas for diplomatic and service passports between the two sides.

On the third document signed, Mr. Velayati said: This document is, in fact, a declaration of the principles of cooperation between the two countries, which will be signed by the presidents of the two countries in the future.

In reply to a question by a Russian reporter about the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr. Velayati stressed: We have from the beginning condemned the cruelties and crimes of the Serbs against Muslims and Croats. We have repeatedly voiced our wish for an end to the crimes and the establishment of peace. He added: The policy which we pursue in international circles, including the United Nations and the Islamic Conference Organization, is based on respect for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the halting of Serbian crimes, and the establishment of a fair and honorable peace in the region.

On the policies of Iran and Russia concerning the Karabakh issue, Mr. Velayati said: The two countries agree on the ending of the clashes in the region. From the outset the two countries have tried to put an end to this war. The two countries have agreed to continue mediating between the warring sides for the establishment of an honorable peace.

Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev said that his visit to Tehran was aimed at strengthening the friendly ties between the two countries. In reply to a question about mutual ties and the policy of the two countries in the Organization of the Caspian Sea Littoral States, he said: The issue of the cooperation between the Caspian Sea littoral states was among the topics of discussion at this round of talks. Russia and Iran are neighbors via the Caspian Sea.

He added: During the talks, the two countries stressed their desire to strengthen the existing ties and called for other mechanisms to increase cooperation.

He said: We agreed to have consultations at deputy foreign minister level, so that we can sign a general document. We will cooperate with Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan in that respect.

He said: Iran and Russia will cooperate in using marine resources and in protection of the environment in the Caspian Sea. In the near future, the way will be paved for a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Organization of the Caspian Sea Littoral States and subsequently a meeting between the members, at the highest level, for the signing of a general document.

Algeria's Decision To Sever Ties 'Irrational'

*LD2803105393 Tehran IRNA in English 0921 GMT
28 Mar 93*

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA—The foreign ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi today regretted Algeria's decision to sever diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran and termed the move as "irrational."

"The decision has been taken on the basis of a false and hasty analysis of the internal situation in Algeria," Sarmadi told IRNA.

"The Algerian Government, in a bid to mislead the public opinion from the realities and to cover up the unstable circumstances as well as the internal instability stemming from overlooking the votes and views of the people of that country, has always tried to attribute its internal problems to overseas."

The High Council of Algeria on Saturday [27 March] announced its decision to cut diplomatic ties with Iran. It accused the Islamic Republic of interference in its internal affairs and support for terrorism.

Sarmadi said the historical and cultural background of the "Muslim and heroic" people of Algeria was the "best evidence" that they are treading an independent and wise path. "Therefore," he said, "the only way to come out of the present difficulties is (for the Algerian government) to respect the votes and views of the nation."

Sudanese Envoy Regrets Algerian Stance

*LD2903144693 Tehran IRNA in English 1338 GMT
29 Mar 93*

[Text] Tehran, March 29, IRNA—The Sudanese ambassador to Tehran Monday [29 March] said that Algeria has severed diplomatic ties with Iran and Sudan because of the escalation of the popular struggle at home and because enemies of Islam have encouraged Algerian officials to take such a measure.

The ambassador, 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad Sa'id, described the Algerian Government's decision as "unrealistic" and said "we are sorry that Algiers has taken such a stand."

He accused the political body now ruling Algiers of seeking an excuse to link its internal problems to foreign

countries and said Algeria's severance of diplomatic relations with Tehran and Khartoum was justifiable in this context.

The ambassador, denying claims that Iran and Sudan were inducing the Algerian Muslims, said the popular movement in Algeria is an internal affair of that country and had nothing to do with Iran and Sudan.

Muhammad Sa'id, who was talking to IRNA, made it clear that Sudan favors freedom of speech and religion for the whole nations of the world and that the Algerian people are not an exception to the rule.

The ambassador also refuted as "mere lie" claims raised by certain countries, the U.S. in particular, that Islamic activists are being trained in Sudan with financial support of Iran.

"The goal of such claims is to prepare the ground for intervention in Sudan," the ambassador said and called on those making such accusation to provide evidence, if they had any.

The opposition voiced by Tehran and Khartoum to the Middle East peace talks, which aimed at pushing Arab states towards a compromise with Israel, accounted for pressure exerted on both countries by the West and their supporters, he said.

He also expressed optimism about the success of a forthcoming peace talks between the Khartoum government and the rebel forces in south Sudan, to be held in Nigeria this month.

Reaction to Algerian Decision To Sever Ties

NC2803054593 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 28 Mar 93*

[Unattributed commentary from the "In the Margin of the News" feature prepared by the Central News Unit's Research Group]

[Text] In the name of God. Algeria's coupist government has launched new efforts to emerge from its legitimacy crisis. According to news sources, after talks with non-Islamic parties, the Algerian ruling council is trying to rectify the current cabinet by including national and socialist parties in power.

The unsettled situation in the Algerian capital last night and the deployment of dozens of tanks and armored personnel carriers around government buildings and radio and television stations show that the efforts by the ruling military council in Algeria to form a multiparty cabinet have been in vain, that the government has resorted to an intensification of security measures in a bid to prevent an exacerbation of the situation, and that it may declare an emergency state within the next few days.

The recent attack by government opponents on two military garrisons, which resulted in 30 deaths, speaks of the government's extreme weakness when facing its opponents. To cover its weakness, the council ruling once again has ignored the domestic elements that are to blame for Algeria's crisis and has accused foreign countries of interfering in its domestic affairs.

The council, which trampled on the outcome of the parliamentary elections a year ago and seized power by removing the Islamists, who were elected by the people, yesterday accused Iran and Sudan of supporting the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], completely severed its relations with Iran, and summoned its ambassador from Sudan.

Some time ago the Algerian press made a baseless and incredible allegation accusing Iran of giving \$5 billion to the FIS. Of course, such accusations or the severance of relations with one country or another will not alter the nature of Algeria's crisis, and this crisis will end only when the ruling council in Algeria respects the outcome of the elections and surrenders to its people's wishes.

Commentary Assesses Algerian Move To Break Ties

LD2803112693 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0949 GMT 28 Mar 93*

[Text] The Algerian High State Council announced yesterday that it has decided to break off that country's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. A statement issued at the end of the Algerian High State Council session refers to the matter, but provides no explanation about it.

Relations between Algeria and Tehran have cooled since last year when crisis flared in Algeria. Algeria accuses Iran of supporting Islamic groups and for that reason six months ago it called for a reduction in the number of personnel at the two countries' embassies. The Islamic Republic of Iran responded by officially rejecting any kind of interference in the internal affairs of Algeria. [Iran] believes that people of Algeria themselves should decide their fate.

Following the remarkable victory of the Islamic groups in the first round of Algeria's parliamentary elections, the Algerian State Council stopped the second round of elections and resorted to a number of moves to reduce the tension which had been created.

The suppression of the Muslim people of Algeria was one of the first actions in the agenda of the High State Council. Islamic parties, which comprise the most significant of political organization in Algeria, were dissolved, thousands of their supporters arrested, and large numbers killed in clashes with government forces.

Initially, opposition groups decided to show self-restraint in the face of the actions by government forces.

However, with the increase in suppressive measures by the security forces, their [opposition group's] peaceful activities turned to reciprocal action—to the extent that around 300 government troops were killed in armed clashes during the previous year. Reacting to this, the Algerian government raised the issue of national reconciliation negotiations with political parties to reduce the crisis in the country. But the absence of the main Islamic parties during those talks effectively defeated this attempt of the Algerian government.

The assassination of five high-ranking Algerian officials during the past few days at the same time as the national reconciliation talks has shown that Islamic groups continue to have the ability to resist high-ranking Algerian officials despite the restrictions placed on them.

Now that the attempts of Algeria's [Higher] Ruling Council to reduce the crisis have failed, that Council has decided to once again use the old tactic of blaming foreign countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, for its internal events in an attempt to re-examine this defeat. It is obvious that Algeria's ruling clique cannot reduce the existing tensions—which have internal roots—with such methods; since any neutral observer realizes that the crisis in Algeria is too deep to have been created by the interference of external factors. Those who have closely monitored the developments in Algeria over recent years are unanimous in the fact that the only way to reduce the existing crisis in that country is refraining from the violent confrontation of the Muslim people of Algeria and the renewal of free elections in that country. Charging other countries with interfering in Algeria's internal events cannot end a crisis—the continuation of which will lead to fundamental changes in the political structure of Algeria.

Foreign, Interior Ministers Allegedly Injured

AU2903093093 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German
29 Mar 93 p 161

[Unattributed report: "Attack in Iran?"]

[Text] Despite denials in Tehran it seems that an attack has been carried out on the political leadership in Iran. As has become known from intelligence service circles, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Interior Minister 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi were injured by an attack during a session of the Council of Ministers on 13 March. The country's supreme police chief was flown to Germany with gunshot wounds and taken to the Hanover Nordstadt hospital for treatment amid tight security measures (security stage I). On Saturday the week before last [20 March] Nuri-Hoseynabadi was flown to Saudi Arabia. Rumors from opposition circles around former president Bani-Sadr claiming that Iran's religious leader 'Ali Khamene'i was also seriously wounded turned out to be unfounded.

* Interior Minister Reportedly Wounded in Blast

93LA0010A London KEYHAN in Persian 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] It was reported and then denied that 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi, the interior minister of the Islamic Republic, on Tuesday, 16 Mar (25 Esfand), the day following the explosion in the office of Ali Khamene'i, travelled to Germany in an unknown and unidentified manner and was transferred directly to the hospital of the city of Hanover in northern Germany to be treated and operated on by Professor Majid Sami'i, the famous Iranian bone surgeon.

It is still unclear whether or not the injury of the interior minister of the Islamic Republic is related to the explosion that was said to have occurred on Monday, 15 Mar (24 Esfand), in the office of the leader of the Islamic Republic.

The local newspaper, BILD HANOVER, which published the report on the transfer of 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi to "Nordstadt" Hospital, wrote: He was brought in an unidentified manner on Lufthansa Flight 572 to Germany, and only a few people know of the entry of this "high-ranking guest."

The Iranian media did not report the sudden visit of 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi to Germany, and most likely his flying on Lufthansa and not Iran Air indicates that the Islamic Republic wanted to keep the news secret. Upon arrival in Germany, 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi did not wear a robe and turban, even though he is a cleric and has the title of Hojjat ol-Eslam.

BILD HANOVER newspaper wrote: The security precautions around him were very serious, and the interior minister of the Islamic Republic was "surrounded" by police. The same newspaper added: The illness and injury of 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi is the result of an assassination attempt on his life, but did not cause his death.

'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi was taken by police escort in a bullet-proof Mercedes Benz at 1625 on 16 Mar (25 Esfand) to the hospital from the "back door" to Prof. Majid Sami'i's examination room. Due to the fear of assassination, the duration of his stay in the hospital has not been announced.

"Nordstadt" Hospital officials refused to give any precise information about their "high-ranking" patient and only said that he arrived four days before the report of the explosion in Ali Khamene'i's office, whereas the report by HANOVER BILD [as published] indicates that his entry into the hospital occurred one day after this news was released.

'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi, the interior minister, is a 46-year-old cleric from Esfahan. A few weeks before the interpellation of the minister of roads and transport, he was supposed to be interpellated by the Majles, and even though

more than 100 deputies had signed the interpellation proposal, it remains unclear why the interpellation did not take place. 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi told newspapers that he "knew nothing" about being interpellated.

An informed source told KEYHAN: If the action to kill 'Abdollah Nuri-Hoseynabadi occurred prior to the publication of the report of the bomb explosion in Khomeini's office, logically one of the antiregime groups pursuing armed solutions is responsible for it; however, no such organization has claimed responsibility.

*** Amrollahi Discusses Nuclear Capabilities, Hopes**

93LA0010C London KEYHAN in Persian 25 Mar 93
pp 1, 9

[Interview with Reza Amrollahi, the deputy president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of the Islamic Republic, by the press; place and date not given]

[Text] Amrollahi, the vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of the Islamic Republic, announced in a press conference: We have 12 uranium exploration projects in Iran, five of which are almost complete, but so far we have not done any excavation in order to try to export it to other countries. This is the natural right of Iran to get access to nuclear energy. Our people have the right to expect to have two out of the 420 nuclear power plants in the world.

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of the Islamic Republic said: I emphasize for the hundredth time that Iran has no program to procure and produce nuclear weapons, and the goals of Iran in this area are restricted to the use of the atom in agriculture, medicine, and electricity. He pointed out that Iran has no nuclear cooperation with the former Soviet republics and has sent no one to any of these republics, including Kazakhstan. Amrollahi added: We are a member of the International Atomic Energy Organization and have also signed the agreement prohibiting the spread of nuclear weapons and do not intend to violate it. But Israel has 200 nuclear weapons and no one bothers it. A foreign correspondent questioned Amrollahi: The European Parliament has said that you are building a nuclear bomb. What is your answer? He said: We have been working in this area for 18 years, 15 years of which I have supervised it. But the European Parliament has never asked me or our representative about this matter.

This reporter asked about nuclear cooperation between Iran and China. Amrollahi said: We have purchased two 300-megawatt electrical units from China. We are an independent country and have the right to gain access to atomic energy.

A reporter asked about purchasing a nuclear bomb from Kazakhstan. The head of the Atomic Energy Organization said: If Iran has sent anyone to Kazakhstan, show us a copy of his passport. We have sent no one to Kazakhstan. Concerning the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant,

Amrollahi explained to a reporter: After the revolution, the Germans left the job incomplete and left, and this issue is still being examined in a court in Switzerland.

In response to a reporter who asked, Does not signing a nuclear agreement with the Chinese indicate the hope that the Germans will continue the work, Amrollahi said: Yes. The reason for signing the agreement with China is the lack of cooperation of Germany to build the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant. If they do not want to do the job, someone else will make it possible for Iran to gain access to nuclear energy. We need electricity. Of course, we have not yet given up on the Germans.

Cabinet Forbids Unauthorized Bread Price Rises

LD2803194593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT
28 Mar 93

[Text] The cabinet met this afternoon and reviewed important domestic and foreign events. At this meeting a number of regulations concerning the budget bill for 1372 [year beginning 21 March] were discussed and passed.

The cabinet announced that a rise in the price of bread in some Tehran bakeries was unauthorized. It was decided that, since the price of the effective factors involved in the cost of producing bread have not changed, the Ministry of Commerce should strongly prevent this opportunism.

The cabinet also decided that ministries should notify all their affiliated organs that no commodities or services should become dearer on the pretext that there has been a change in the factors affecting costs and the introduction of a single rate of exchange. The cabinet stressed that any kind of change in the price of goods and services offered by state-run or state-funded organizations should be made with prior permission from the Economic Council or the cabinet.

*** Iranian Banks Reportedly Short of Cash**

93LA0010D London KEYHAN in Persian 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] The shortage of cash in Iranian banks has disrupted the economic situation inside the home and out. In recent weeks, those who have gone to receive money with guaranteed checks to the branches that have signed the same checks were faced with negative replies from the bank. On some days last week, the Melli Bank could not cash the checks of its customers, even for the amount of 100,000 tomans. Two customers of the Melli Bank who had gone to two branches on Karim Khan and 25 Shahrivar in Tehran faced long lines of those who were holding guaranteed checks, which the bank could not honor. They said: After hours we were told to go to the supervisory branch, but that bank, too, had no cash. From there we went to the Commerce Bank, and the situation of that bank was no better than that of the previous ones. A reader of KEYHAN who returned to

London on Sunday of this week said: After the Melli Bank could not pay my guaranteed check, I resorted to the money exchange shops on Ferdowsi Street and gave them the check for a smaller amount of money and bought dollars. Then I exchanged the dollars into rials right there in order to take care of business.

Pakistan

Sharif Refuses Landing for Hijacked Indian Plane

BK2703143493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The hijacker of an Indian airliner has surrendered to authorities in the city of Amritsar after being denied permission to land in Pakistan. The airliner with more than 200 people on board was commandeered soon after it took off from New Delhi on a flight to the southern city of Madras. The Hindu hijacker, identified as Hari Singh, took over the plane claiming that he had explosives strapped to his body and forced the plane to head toward Lahore. In a statement over the aircraft's radio, the hijacker said he was protesting against communal violence and corrupt politics in India. The plane circled over Lahore airport for 40 minutes where the runway was blocked by the authorities. After being denied permission to land, it turned back to northern India where it landed in the city of Amritsar with the hijacker surrendering to the authorities.

A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today said the Indian airliner was not allowed to land on instructions from the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. The spokesman said the Pakistan High Commissioner in New Delhi was instructed to cooperate with the Indian authorities in defusing the situation.

Defense Minister Rejects Talk of War With India

BK2803132193 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 28 Mar 93 p 3

[Text] Sukkur (APP)—Defence Minister Syed Ghaus Ali Shah Friday ruled out imminent danger of war with India, saying that the news in this regard in a section of Press were mere speculations.

While replying to a newsman's question before departure for Karachi in which he had mentioned about the presence of large number of Indian troops on Indo-Pak border, the Defence Minister said that the present government was fully alive to country's defence needs and could meet any untoward situation.

Our valiant armed forces were well equipped now, they had done excellent work in these times of war and peace in past and they were capable enough to foil any kind of foreign aggression, he added.

The Minister said "We believe in peaceful co-existence with all countries specially our neighbours, but would not bargain on principles".

On a question about raising of new cantonments in Sindh, the Defence Minister said it was a normal thing and cantonments could be raised in Sindh in the light of their feasibility and geo-physical importance for the area.

Federal Defence Minister Syed Ghaus Ali Shah has hoped that the old linkage of Pakistan with the Central Asian region would further be fostered, and there would be quick developments in the trade, scientific and cultural fields between the two regions in coming years.

The Minister said that Central Asian region was very rich in natural resources, while with immense manpower Pakistan could exploit their resources for the benefit of both the regions.

He said that Pakistan had old links of religion, history and culture with the Central Asian Muslim states and they would further be strengthened with the mutual exchange of the people.

Pakistan could serve as a gate way to the Central Asian region in future, and ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] could play a vital role in developing the trade and cultural ties among the member countries, he added.

On a question about Pak/America relations, the Defence Minister said that it was unfair to expect of Pakistan to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty when India was not ready to sign it.

He said Pakistan enjoyed the diplomatic support of other nations, including China and Russia, on her principled stand on it.

He said that Secretary-General Foreign Affairs Akram Zaki had fruitful discussions with the member of Clinton administration recently, and a general understanding on all issues had developed between the two governments.

He said Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif had recently offered his Indian counterpart to hold dialogue for resolving all pending issues between the two states, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, which demonstrated the good intentions on part of Pakistan. He said the country enjoyed a peculiar geo-political position in the South East Asia region, as such it would be in the interest of the people of India and Pakistan to maintain cordial relations and peace in this area.

The Defence Minister paid rich tributes to Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's display of sagacity and statesmanship in reaching Islamabad peace accord for laying a sound basis for stability in Afghanistan.

He said that durable peace in Afghanistan was in the best interest of this region, as Afghanistan could serve as a workable channel between Central Asian states and Pakistan for promoting trade and cultural relations.

The Defence Minister who was on a couple of day's visit to Sukkur and Khairpur, spent busy time in his Garhi Mori (Khairpur) residence. Various delegations of

Muslim Leaguers, farmers, lawyers, students, social workers and officials called on him and discussed problems of the area.

Indian Allegations on Bombay Bombings Refuted

BK2903112393 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] The secretary general foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, has forcefully refuted the allegations levelled by the chief minister of Maharashtra, Mr. Sharad Pawar, about Pakistan's involvement in recent bomb blasts in Bombay. In an interview with the BBC, he described these allegations as baseless and pointed out that the Indian leaders had been trying to put the blame on Pakistan for their own problems. He categorically stated that Pakistan had nothing to do with the bomb blasts in India.

The secretary general foreign affairs said several members of the British and European parliaments have visited Pakistan to take stock of the situation. But India has not given permission to anybody to see the human rights violations in the occupied Kashmir. He said it is India which has been trying to conceal from the world massive human rights violations in the held territory.

Sharif Leaves for London en Route to German Visit

BK2703143893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, left Islamabad for London en route to Germany. His five-day official visit to Germany begins from Monday. During his stay in London, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, will meet the British prime minister, Mr. John Major. In Germany, the prime minister is expected to exchange views with Chancellor Helmut Kohl on bilateral relations, regional and international issues and the possibility of enhancing existing economic relations between Pakistan and Germany. Federal Minister Mr. Sartaj Aziz and Rana Chandar Singh and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo are accompanying the prime minister on his visit to Germany.

Five Libyans Arrested for 'Terrorist Activities'

BK2903070593 Islamabad THE NATION in English 29 Mar 93 p 3

[Text] Peshawar: Peshawar police arrested five Libyan nationals allegedly involved in various terrorist activities Saturday [27 March].

According to police sources, the Gulbahar police stopped a suspected vehicle number PRN-8110 during checking near Gulbahar crossing. After checking the police party recovered two pistols of 30 bore with 30 cartridges, fake passport stamps, U.S. dollars and Pakistan currency from the possession of five occupants of the vehicle who belonged to Libya.

The names of the occupants of the vehicle were Saeed son of Yousaf, Abu Qasim son of Mohammad, Abdul Razzaq son of Ashor, Kamal son of Abdul Fateh and Khalid son of Mohammad. Two of them were residing in the city area while three were living in Hayatabad Township.

On the pointation of the arrested persons, the police party raided the house of another Libyan national Fida Mohammad son of Abdul Horara living in the outskirts of Peshawar.

The resident of the house hurled hand grenade on the police party injuring three locals who were taken to hospital for treatment and arrested culprit. The police recovered handgrenades, eight fake passports of different countries, 25 stamps of Arabian language, cheque book of the Bank of Oman and one Pakistani fake passport. They also recovered two motorcycles, 1,00 [as published] U.S. Dollars and about one lakh Pakistani rupees from the house.

17 Dead, 26 Kidnapped in Clash With Afghan Mojahedin

BK2803132293 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 28 Mar 93 p 12

[By Majid Qazi]

[Text] Quetta: A group of the Afghan Mojahedin kidnapped 26 personnel of paramilitary forces headed by a major after a clash that left 17 dead and many injured on Thursday (Eid day) near Multani border post in Zhob district.

The clash took place when a Frontier Corps (FC) contingent raided the houses of Khaliq Dad and Mulla Abdul Jabbar near Durand Line to recover a non-commissioned officer (NCO) of the FC, Zar Wali. The NCO was abducted from Qamar Din Karez, a town located near Pak-Afghan border on March 23, 1993 and was reportedly kept at the houses of Khaliq Dad and Mulla Jabbar.

During the exchange of fire about 15 civilians and two FC personnel were killed. Later, the accused, who were also using automatic weapons besieged the FC personnel and disarmed them.

The FC troops including a Major named Asif, two JCOs [junior commissioned officers] and 23 sepoy [soldiers], were taken across the border along with their weapons and two vehicles.

When the raiding party lost its contact with the headquarters, another FC contingent was sent to the site which found the dead bodies of two of their colleagues.

The bodies of Subbedar Tehsinullah and Sepoy Zarwali were later brought to Zhob. They will be taken to the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] for burial in their native villages.

The incident caused panic in the area and on Friday Inspector General of the Frontier Zafar Mehdi, Commissioner of Loralai Division Irfan Kansi and Political Agent of Zhob Zafar Iqbal Qadir visited Qamar Din Karez and inspected the site of the clash. They also held meetings with elders of the area and the commanders of the Afghan Mojahedin for the arrest of the culprits and the return of the FC personnel.

Meanwhile, reinforcement is being despatched to Qamar Din Karez and Multani border posts to launch an operation for the recovery of the abducted FC men. The Inspector General of the Frontier Corps is supervising the operation.

According to informed sources the kidnappers belong to a group of Afghan Mojahedin headed by Mullah Abdol Salam whose base camp near Badini in Qial Saifullah District was recently raided by the FC. About two weeks ago the FC troops had recovered large quantity of arms, ammunition and electronic gadgets like wireless sets and field telephones besides a shoulder-mounted guided anti-aircraft Stinger missile from his camp. The sources believe that the abduction of the NCO was merely a bait to trap more FC personnel and the culprits succeeded in their plan.

According to some other sources the raid had annoyed Commander Mullah Abdol Salam because he had already struck a deal with a team of government agencies for the sale of Stingers possessed by him. But, instead of making payment, the law enforcement agencies raided his camp to recover the missile. He took this raid as a betrayal, the sources added.

Some government agencies have launched a campaign to buy back the Stingers from the Afghan Mojahedin as the government considers these guided anti-aircraft missiles in the hands of Afghan groups as a potential threat to the civil aviation in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Sharif Nominated as Muslim League President

BK2703151293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] A meeting of the elders and leaders of Pakistan Muslim League held in Islamabad today has unanimously nominated the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, as candidate for the presidency of Pakistan Muslim League. The meeting was participated by a large number of party office bearers from all the four provinces and elders of Pakistan Muslim League. It has been a tradition of the Muslim League that whenever the office of the party president falls vacant, Muslim League elders meet to decide about the next president and the president nominated by the elders is elected by the Central Council of the party.

The meeting unanimously adopted a condolence resolution moved by Mian Mohammad Yasin Khan Wattoo paying rich tributes to late Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo, former prime minister and president of the

Muslim League. The meeting lauded the role played by Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo, especially for bringing an end to martial law, lifting of emergency and restoration of democracy, constitution and fundamental rights. Fateha [prayers] were offered for the departed soul.

The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution moved by Mr. Fida Mohammad Khan nominating Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif as candidate for the presidency of Pakistan Muslim League in view of his meritorious and dynamic services in strengthening the Pakistan Muslim League and in launching a major socioeconomic program for the well-being of the people of Pakistan. The resolution also urged that meeting of the Muslim League Council should be held within 45 days to elect Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif as president of Pakistan Muslim League. The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, expressed his gratitude to the participants of the meeting for his nomination to the office of Muslim League president and the confidence reposed in him by the meeting. He said all-out efforts would be made to organize Pakistan Muslim League throughout the country and we will carry along all the Muslim Leaguers.

Later, the vice president of the Muslim League, Mr. Abdul Sattar Lalila, briefed newsmen about the details of the meeting. He said during the meeting, which lasted about three and half hours, a large number of Muslim League elders expressed their views. They were of the opinion that Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif is the most suitable person to head the Pakistan Muslim League. These elders lauded the services rendered by the prime minister and said Muslim League needs such a dynamic personality so that the party could be organized on a sound footing.

On a question, Mr. Abdul Sattar Lalika said the session of the Muslim League's Central Council can be summoned by the vice president or requisition by 75 members of the council. He was confident that the Muslim League will remain united and Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif will be unanimously elected by the Central Council as president of Pakistan Muslim League.

Three Ministers Resign Over Nomination

BK2803085693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Three members of the government in Pakistan have resigned. They have expressed reservations over the nomination of the prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, for the presidency of the Muslim League—the largest party in the governing coalition. Reports say that two more ministers may also submit their resignations over the issue. The post of the Muslim League's president had fallen vacant following the death of Mohammad Khan Junejo last week.